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Frontispiece

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Balarāma, Pāla, 10th — 11th Cent. AD, Bihar

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ICONOGRAPHY OF BALARĀMA

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Prologue

Iconographic studies of minor divinities are no less important than those of the major deities like Viṣṇu, Śiva, Sūrya, Śakti and Gaṇapati. Indeed, studies of minor divinities sometimes throw a welcome light on problems related to the major gods and goddesses. In the following pages, efforts have been made to give an account of the legends and iconography of Balarāma, the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa, who is taken to be the eighth incarnation of Viṣṇu. Balarāma is an age-old deity associated with wrestling, fighting with clubs, and agriculture. He is also a serpent deity. His images can be easily traced back to the 2nd century BC and continue down to our times.

The present study is confined to North India in general and Uttar Pradesh in particular. We have taken notice of 56 figures of Balarāma from UP in stone, terracotta or metal. To make this study more comprehensive, we have also noted 33 images outside UP. Thus it may be said that the present study, based on 89 images in all, helps in a proper understanding of different aspects of the iconography of Balarāma, both Brahmanical and Jaina.

The subject matter has been presented in five

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chapters. The opening chapter narrates Brahmanic and Jaina legends concerning Balarāma and serves as a general background for the discussions in the succeeding chapters. The second and third chapters deal with the details of his iconography. The fourth chapter lists 89 images in brief, and this is the actual data of the present study. The last chapter is really an appendix to this work and incorporates some important original passages from different texts concerning the iconography. This portion, though not complete in itself, should be useful to readers for ready reference.

The following topics call for the special attention of scholars, and suggestions and comments about them are welcome:

(i) Attributes of Balarāma such as his headgear with triple crest, single earring and nimbus-like snake canopy.
(ii) His association with the lion.
(iii) Appearance of a crocodile with him.
(iv) Ekānamśā figures of the Kuṣāṇa period.
(v) Development of *vanamālā*.
(vi) Symbolic representation of Balarāma.

The author completed this work in 1966 and the manuscript was handed over to Prof Dr Herbert Härtel, Director of the Museum für Indische Kunst in Berlin (West Germany), who was then busy in excavation at Sonkh, near Govardhan, for his valuable comments. The professor was kind enough to go through the entire manuscript very carefully and give his comments at length on 4 February 1967, on the eve of his departure to Germany. A number of his suggestions have been incorporated in this work,

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but the most important one has been untouched. Prof Härtel wanted me to present a comprehensive chronological sequence of the gradual evolution of the Balarāma legend right from the earliest available point. Years rolled by, but I could not do it, and the work remained unpublished till now.

Perhaps this book would not have seen the light of day but for friendly goading from my learned friend Dr B.N. Sharma, Keeper, Archaeology, in the National Museum, New Delhi. Shri Shakti Malik, our present publisher, compelled me to take up the work again, bring it uptodate and make it ready for the press. Consequently, I am happy to record that the complete text has been rewritten and a few fresh plates and figures added. But I am sorry that Prof Härtel's valuable suggestion could not be acted upon. I can only hope that some of my *samāna-dharmā* will comply with it in the future.

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Shri Sharma has been kind enough to supply fresh prints of some of the Balarāma and Nāga figures. The photographs from the State Museum, Lucknow, have been prepared by my colleague Shri Rajesh Kumar Sinha. His assistance, that of his assistant, Shri Rajjan Khan, and of

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members of the Photographic Section of the Mathura Museum is therefore gratefully recorded.

Makara Sankranti
14 January 1978

N.P. Joshi

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Abbreviations

Agni	*Agni Purāṇa*, Mor Edition, Calcutta
ASI	Archaeological Survey of India
Bh K Bh	Bhārat Kalā Bhavan, Varanasi
BMA	*Bulletin of Museums and Archaeology in Uttar Pradesh*, Lucknow
Development	Banerjea J.N., *Development of Hindu Iconography*, Calcutta, 1956
Elements	Rao Gopinath, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*
Fig	Figure in line
HVM	*Harivaṁśa*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur edition
Jain Stupa	Smith V., *Jain Stupa and Other Antiquities from Mathura*
JISOA	*Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, New Series, Baroda
JNSI	*Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, Varanasi
Kūrma	*Kūrma Purāṇa*, Mor Edition, Calcutta
Matsya	*Matsya Purāṇa*, Mor Edition, Calcutta
MBH	*Mahābhārata*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur edition
MM	Government Museum, Mathura

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Pl	Plate
SML	State Museum, Lucknow
Vaiṣṇavism	Bhandarkar R.G., *Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism and Minor Religious Systems*, reprint 1965
Viṣṇu	*Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, Gītā Press, Gorakhpur edition
VDH	*Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*

Signs

+	Number of sculpture from UP described in Chapter IV
++	Number of sculpture outside UP described in Chapter IV
Numericals within parentheses	Passage from the original text given in Chapter V

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Pls 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 23, 26, 33, 34, 35	Government Museum, Mathura
5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 22, 24, 25, 28, 29, 30, 31	State Museum, Lucknow
8a, b, c	Dr B.N. Sharma, New Delhi
9	Bharat Kala Bhavan, BHU, Varanasi
6	Victoria and Albert Museum, London
27	British Museum, London
36	*Artibus Asiae*, Ascona

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BALARĀMA FIGURES AT A GLANCE

Location	Period				Total
	Śuṅga	Kuṣāṇa	Gupta	Mediaeval and Modern	
Mathura	—	16	4	8	28
Lucknow	1	5	2	8	16
Varanasi	1	—	—	5	6
Allahabad	—	1	1	2	4
Bhitargaon (Kanpur)	—	—	1	—	1
Deogarh (Lalitpur)	—	—	1	—	1
Gwalior	1	—	1	3	5
Kota	—	—	—	1	1
Abaneri	—	—	—	1	1
Amjhara	—	—	—	1	1
Osian	—	—	—	3	3
Khajuraho	—	—	—	8	8
Katara (Bharatpur)	—	—	—	1	1
Nand	—	1	—	—	1
Devangarh	—	1	—	—	1
Kurkihar	—	—	—	1	1
New Delhi	—	—	—	1	1
Paharpur	—	—	—	1	1
Nepal	—	—	—	2	2
Berlin	—	—	1	—	1
London	—	—	—	1	1
	3	24	11	47	85

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1

Legends

Balarāma, Baladeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Balabhadra are some names of one and the same deity who commanded respect in the Brahmanical as well as Jaina pantheons. Both faiths preserve legends about him, and one must make oneself familiar with them as different iconographic features and types of images of Balarāma can be properly understood only in the light of them.

Brahmanic Legend

The Brahmanic faith believes Balarāma is a form of Viṣṇu, an incarnation of the cosmic serpent Śeṣa, also known as Ananta. Balarāma is the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa. In all the Vaiṣṇava *purāṇas* and epics, Balabhadra is mentioned along with Kṛṣṇa. But the most varied description of his life and work appears in the *Mahābhārata*, and especially its final chapter *Harivaṁśa*. The following account is based mainly on these sources.

Balarāma was destined to be the seventh son of Devakī, wife of Vāsudeva, but he was miraculously transferred to the womb of Rohiṇī, another wife of Vāsudeva, by Yogamāyā of Mahāviṣṇu. Thus born of Rohiṇī, Balarāma lived in Gokula along with Kṛṣṇa.

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In his stay there, he killed the demons Dhenuka and Pralamba at Kṛṣṇa's suggestion. According to the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, Balarāma's mother Rohiṇī was a princess from Bactria (Vālhika). She had Balarāma and seven other sons and one daughter.[1] The *Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa* considers her an incarnation of the Great Mother of Snakes (*Sarpa Mātā*).[2]

Invited by Kaṁsa, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went to Mathura to participate in his festival (*samāja*), where Kṛṣṇa killed Kaṁsa. After enthroning Ugrasena at Mathura, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa went to Ujjain to be educated at the *āśrama* of the sage Sāndīpani. Meanwhile, Jarāsandha, King of Rājagṛha, was enraged when he heard reports of the death of Kaṁsa, his son-in-law. This powerful ruler decided to teach a lesson to the Yādavas, but his plans failed and he had to return unsuccessful. But it was no longer safe for the Yādavas to live at Mathura, and ultimately Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa decided to migrate south. They met Paraśurāma on the way, and he advised them to go to Mt Gomanta in the far south and wait there for Jarāsandha, who was pursuing them. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma accepted the advice and stayed on Gomanta. It was here that once, when Kṛṣṇa was absent, Balarāma had his first sip of the wine Kādambarī.

Very soon Jarāsandha, assisted by several other kings, reached Gomanta, and it was here that the

1. Rāma, Sāraṇa, Śaṭha, Durdama, Damana, Śubhra, Piṇḍāraka and Kuśītaka were the eight brothers and Chitrā the sister.
   Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, *Upoddhātapāda*, 71, 163-64.
2. *Brahma-vaivarta*, Śrīkṛṣṇajanma-khaṇḍa, 9, 27-40.

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famous war Chakra-Mūsala-Saṅgrāma between the two brothers and the ruler of Rājagṛha was fought. It has been described as very bloody and the second of its type compared with the great war of the *Mahābhārata*. With the help of their divine weapons, the two brothers emerged victorious and returned to Mathura with added lustre

Balarāma paid a short visit to Vṛja after the victory and drank to his satisfaction. In the fury of intoxication he dragged the river Yamunā towards himself so as to bathe in it.

Under the leadership of Kṛṣṇa, the Yādavas migrated to the seashore and the new city of Dvārakā was built on the spot. Balarāma married Revatī, daughter of King Revata, and Kṛṣṇa wedded Rukmiṇī, princess of Vidarbha. Aniruddha, grandson of Kṛṣṇa, married Princess Rukmāvatī, granddaughter of Rukmī, brother-in-law of Kṛṣṇa. On the occasion of this marriage, Rukmī invited Balarāma to gamble with him. Balarāma won the stake, but a quarrel arose between him and the cunning Rukmī. Consequently, Balarāma put Rukmī to death.

Balarāma's relations with Duryodhana, eldest son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, chief of the Kurūs of Hastināpura, must also be taken into consideration. It so happened that Sāmba, one of the sons of Kṛṣṇa, tried to elope with Lakṣmaṇā, daughter of Duryodhana, but was imprisoned by the Kurūs. Balarāma rushed to help him. When negotiations failed, he threatened to demolish the city wall and submerge the entire capital under the waters of the Gaṅgā. At this, Duryodhana not only agreed to give Lakṣmaṇā to Sāmba in marriage, but desired to learn to wield a

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mace (*gadā*) and offered to become a disciple of Balarāma, who accepted the offer. According to the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*,[1] Duryodhana had his lessons in *gadā-yuddha* at Mithilā.

Balarāma had a soft corner for Kṛṣṇa's eldest son Pradyumna. He had once taught him a *stotra* to conquer fear. Balarāma was master of his two celestial weapons, the plough (*hala*) and pestle (*mūsala*). In the *Mahābhārata* war, he kept aloof and went on a pilgrimage. On this tour, he was enraged at the behaviour of Sūta Lomaharṣaṇa and put him to death. When his pilgrimage was nearing its end, he came to know that his two disciples Duryodhana and Bhīmasena were measuring maces against each other. He went to see the duel, but when Bhīmasena, adopting foul means, broke the thigh of his enemy, Balarāma not only denounced Bhīmasena but rushed into the fray with his plough to avenge the injustice done to Duryodhana. But Kṛṣṇa pleaded with him to spare Bhīmasena, and the displeased Balarāma returned to Dvārakā. He visited Hastināpura once more after the *Mahābhārata* war on the occasion of the horse sacrifice King Yudhiṣṭhira performed there.

Throughout his life, this great leader of the Vṛṣṇi-Andhaka federation helped his younger brother Kṛṣṇa in every way possible, both at home and in the field. Though himself addicted to wine, he could clearly foresee its evil consequences. He tried to save his clan by tabooing drink, but this was not of much use. The end of the clan was inevitable, and instead of seeing this happen Balarāma preferred to retire

1. *Upoddhātapāda*, 71, 84.

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and obtain *samādhi* on the seashore. While in *samādhi*, a white cobra, the great Śeṣa, whose incarnation Balarāma was, emerged from his face and proceeded to the great ocean, his eternal abode.

Balarāma was fond (*gaura*) of bright colours. Blue clothes, a single earring and the use of *vanamālā* were his special characteristics. Great power was another characteristic, for which he was named Balī, Balabhadra and Baladeva. His standard was a palm (*tāla*), and he was hence also known as Tāladhvaja, Tālaketu and Tālāṅka.

Jaina Legend

In the Jaina pantheon there are among others 24 Tīrthaṅkaras and nine each Nārāyaṇas, Baladevas and Prati-Nārāyaṇas of the past (*avasarpiṇi Kāla*). Similarly, they believe in deities destined to be born in the future (*utsarpiṇi Kāla*). All these Balabhadras —Achala, Vijaya, Bhadra, Suprabha, Sudarśana, Ānanda, Nandana, Padma and Rāma—are similar in appearance and dress, but their parenthood, their Nārāyaṇas and Prati-Nārāyaṇas always differ.

Among all the Balabhadras, only the ninth, named Rāma, is seen in sculptures along with his Nārāyaṇa Kṛṣṇa. This deity seems to correspond to Baladeva or Balarāma of the Brahmanical pantheon, and hence for our purpose only the account of Rāma as given in Jaina mythology is considered.

Among other sources, the best description of Baladeva's life is to be found in the *Jaina Harivaṁśa Purāṇa*. Though a work of about AD 783, it contains facts about many time-honoured traditions. That of Baladeva is one. His life sketch, as given below, has been reconstructed from material scat-

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tered throughout this *purāṇa*.[1]

The 22nd Tīrthaṅkara Neminātha was a scion of the Yādava clan. King Samudravijaya, elder brother of Vāsudeva, was his father. Vāsudeva had several wives, one of whom was Rohiṇī, destined to be the mother of our hero. From her womb, the Mahāsāmanika god Mahāśukra appeared as Baladeva on a very auspicious day.

Devakī was another wife of Vāsudeva and gave birth to Kṛṣṇa, the ninth Nārāyaṇa. Newly born Kṛṣṇa was shifted to Vṛndāvana by Baladeva with the help of his father and kept in the custody of Sunanda Gopa. Baladeva, though living with his parents at Mathura, kept a constant watch on Kṛṣṇa and in due course reported to Devakī various deeds he performed in Gokula and Vṛndāvana. The mother developed a keen desire to see her son and Baladeva took her secretly to Gokula. When Devakī saw him, milk began to ooze from her breasts. This would have revealed her identity, but Baladeva averted it by pouring a jar of milk over her as if to anoint her. She was immediately taken back to Mathura.

As the days passed, Baladeva trained Kṛṣṇa in different arts. Kaṁsa was then ruling in Mathura. He had a serpent bedstead, a bow named Ajitañjaya and the conch Pāñchajanya. It had been predicted that Kaṁsa would meet his death at the hands of him who would get on the bedstead, string the bow and blow the conch. To identify his secret enemy, Kaṁsa proclaimed that whoever could perform all these feats would enjoy the royal pleasures. It so happened

1. *Jaina Harivaṁśa Purāṇa*, Kashi, 1962, Chapters 32, 33, 35, 36, 41, 42, 44, 53, 54, 57, 60, 61, 63, 65, etc.

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that Kṛṣṇa came to Mathura with Bhānu, brother of Kaṁsa's wife. Hearing of the royal proclamation, he went to the palace and successfully accomplished all the feats. When the news reached Baladeva, he immediately arranged to send Kṛṣṇa back to Gokula, away from the cruel clutches of Kaṁsa.

Kaṁsa once ordered cowherds to fetch lotus flowers from a pond inhabited by a poisonous snake, Kāliya. Kṛṣṇa subdued the snake and plucked the flowers. Baladeva embraced him warmly for this feat. Now Kṛṣṇa was well known to Kaṁsa. To do away with him, Kaṁsa ordered all the *gopālas* to come to Mathura with Kṛṣṇa and participate in a wrestling tournament which was being arranged under royal patronage. Vāsudeva smelt a conspiracy and got all his relations to assemble in Mathura.

Baladeva was entrusted with fetching the boy Kṛṣṇa. He went to Gokula, informed Kṛṣṇa of the evil intentions of Kaṁsa and Vāsudeva's plans for his security and exhorted him to face the danger boldly. The brothers then went to Mathura. In the course of the open bouts, Muṣṭika, the famous wrestler of Kaṁsa, met his end at the hands of Baladeva along with many of his fellows. When Kṛṣṇa killed Kaṁsa in the wrestling arena, Baladeva seized a pillar and saved the boy from the approaching forces of the dead king.

Baladeva then married Revatī, daughter of Vidyādhara Ratimāla. He had three more wives—Bandhumatī, Sītā and Rājīvanetrā. With his brother Kṛṣṇa, he defeated the Prati-Nārāyaṇa Jarāsandha who had attacked Mathura to avenge his son-in-law's death. But the Yādavas ultimately decided to migrate to a safer place. They went to the seashore,

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where Baladeva and Kṛṣṇa observed a three-day fast and the sea gave them place to build a new capital. Kubera offered his help in this task and Dvārakā arose in full splendour. The two brothers were greatly honoured, for Kubera not only gave them presents but the entire Yādava Saṅgha performed their *abhiṣeka*.

Baladeva cooperated fully with Kṛṣṇa in all his campaigns, in which Namuchi, Jarāsandha and many others were defeated. After completing their conquests, the two brothers were crowned *Ardhachakravartins* of half Bhārata-kṣetra. Baladeva now possessed five jewels and 8,000 female attendants.

By this time, the 22nd Tīrthaṅkara Neminātha had attained supreme knowledge. So the two brothers joined his *samavasaraṇa* at Mt Girnar to hear him preach. Once Balabhadra sought an interview with Neminātha and desired to know the future and when he would attain perfect *sañyama*. Having come to know that wine would cause their utter destruction, he and his brother banned its manufacture and use, but misfortune was inevitable. Cursed by Dvaipāyana Muni, the city caught fire and the entire clan, except the brothers, was totally ruined. It is interesting to note that Kauṭilya knew of this incident in Mauryan times.[1]

With great remorse, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva wended their way south. They had lost their power. When Kṛṣṇa felt thirsty in the forest of Kauśāmbī, Baladeva went in searth of water. In his absence Kṛṣṇa met his end at the hands of Jaratkumāra, who shot an arrow at him by mistake. The shock was too much

1. *Arthaśāstra, I, 6, 13.*

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for Baladeva. In his anguish, he carried the body of Kṛṣṇa and refused to part with it. Ultimately, Siddhārtha, his former brother who had become a *deva*, came and preached to him. Consequently, Baladeva regained enlightenment and practised penance for 100 years on the summit of Mt Tuṅgika. He was troubled there by some neighbouring rulers, but was saved by the same god. After leaving his ephemeral body, he became Indra in Brahmaloka. Because of his affection for Kṛṣṇa, he went from there to see the soul of his brother, who was then residing in Vālukaprabhā. But Kṛṣṇa requested Baladeva to leave him to his fate and return whence he had come. Baladeva returned to heaven, but before that he propagated Kṛṣṇa worship in Bhāratavarṣa, as requested by Kṛṣṇa.

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2

Balarāma in Iconography

In studying the iconography of Balarāma, the following factors are very helpful as they bear closely on the development of the images of this deity:

(i) Rise of Vaiṣṇavism, especially the school of the *pañcharātras*.
(ii) Brahmanical tradition regarded Balarāma as the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa and an incarnation of the cosmic serpent Śeṣa.
(iii) Popularity of Nāga worship and development of Nāga iconography.
(iv) Balarāma in the Jaina canons.

We now proceed to study these factors in detail.

Rise of Vaiṣṇavism

Dr R.G. Bhandarkar[1] has firmly established that as early as the 4th and 3rd centuries BC a religious system with Vāsudeva as its central figure came into existence. According to the Nārāyaṇīya section of the Śāntiparva, as Vāsudeva explained to Nārada, Vāsudeva is the supreme soul, the internal soul of souls. He is the Supreme Creator. Saṅkarṣaṇa, a

1. *Vaiṣṇavism*, p 4.

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form of Vāsudeva, represents all living beings. From Saṅkarṣaṇa sprang Pradyumna, mind, and from Pradyumna came forth Aniruddha, self-consciousness. The Great Being calls the four mentioned above his forms (*mūrtīs*). Their production, one from another, is also mentioned.[1] These four forms are sometimes known as the *vyūhas* of Viṣṇu, who is therefore called Chaturvyūha.[2]

This is referred to in some of the *purāṇas* also. The *Kūrma Purāṇa*, for example, says[3] that Vāsudeva manifested himself in four forms, namely the original Vāsudeva, *Kāla* or Śiva the *tāmasī* or destructive form, Pradyumna, the *sāttvika* form responsible for maintenance and Aniruddha or Brahmā, the creative form.

The *Agni Purāṇa* informs[4] us that from the original Vāsudeva sprang Saṅkarṣaṇa, from him Pradyumna, who in turn produced Aniruddha. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* describes[5] three forms (*rūpas*) of Vāsudeva—*Puruṣa*, *Vyaktāvyakta* and *Kāla*, in other words the Generator, the Visible and the Invisible, and the Destroyer. Allegorically, these forms seem to correspond with Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Saṅkarṣaṇa, or in other words with Brahmā, Aniruddha and *Kāla* of the *Kūrma Purāṇa*.

1. *Vaiṣṇavism*, p 5.
2. *MBH*, *Anuśāsana Parva*, *Viṣṇu Sahasranāma Stotra*, verse 28

   चतुरात्मा चतुर्व्यूहश्चतुर्दंष्ट्रश्चतुर्भुजः ॥
3. *Kūrma*, Pūrvārdha, 51, 40-44 (28).
4. *Agni*, 48, 13.
5. *Viṣṇu*, I, 2, 12-15. The Purāṇa explains the term Vāsudeva as:

   सर्वत्रा ऽसौ समस्तञ्च वसत्यत्रेति वैयतः
   ततः स वासुदेवेति विद्वद्भिः परिपठ्यते ॥

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At another place in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,[1] Viṣṇu has been addressed as Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. In the *Matsya Purāṇa*,[2] while addressing *Mahāvarāha* or the Great Boar, *Pṛthvī* explains that Vāsudeva means the one who lives in all, Saṅkarṣaṇa the one who pulls everybody, Pradyumna the one who makes all the *dharmas* exist, and Aniruddha he who is all powerful and cannot be restrained.

The *Garuḍa Purāṇa* goes a step forward and refers to the worship of the five (*Pañcha-tatvārchana*). The group includes Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Nārāyaṇa.[3] At another place, it refers to the nine *vyūhas* (*nava-vyūhas*) thereby adding the names of Sudarśana, Śrīhari, Achyuta, Trivikrama and Chaturbhuja to the usual four.[4] Some *smṛtis* have mentioned the four forms. *Laugākṣī Smṛti*, while discussing *pīṭha-pujā*, tells us that Dakṣiṇa or the south is the *diśā* of Saṅkarṣaṇa, while Vāsudeva, Aniruddha and Pradyumna should be worshipped in the east, west and north respectively.[5]

The *chaturvyūha* theory being very popular, as the above evidence shows, is reflected in iconography. The majority of the texts agree that all four, being forms of Viṣṇu, should be depicted with four arms, but their weapons and colour should be different. According to the Pañcharātra school, Balarāma should be white instead of black like Vāsudeva, and should carry plough and pestle in

1. *Viṣṇu*, V, 18, 58.
2. *Matsya*, 247, 46-49 (24).
3. *Garuḍa*, Varanasi, 1964, 32, 1-5, p 37.
4. *Ibid*, 12, 14-15, p 16.
5. *Smṛti Sandarbha*, VI, p 308.

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place of mace and wheel.

Vaikhānasāgama describes two-handed figures of the four deities. According to this text, Vāsudeva should carry conch shell and wheel, Balabhadra plough and pestle, Aniruddha shield and sword, and Pradyumna a dagger.[1] The *Viṣṇu-Dharmottara Purāṇa*,[2] a work of the Gupta age, also gives a detailed description of these four forms.

According to this, each of them should be two-handed and bear sun and moon, pestle and plough, bow and arrow, and shield and sword respectively. The emblems of Vāsudeva, sun and moon, are uncommon, but the practice seems to have been old as we have found a Varāha image of the Kuṣāṇa period bearing sun and moon—both riding chariots drawn by horses—in two hands.[3]

A more interesting style of depicting Chaturvyūha Viṣṇu seems to have been current in the Gupta age, if not earlier. This was Viṣṇu with the additional faces of a boar and a lion. Such images have been found in Mathura and other places and came to be known as Vaikuṇṭha. They have been mentioned in literature also, and the *Viṣṇu-Dharmottara Purāṇa*[4] describes an eight-handed image of Viṣṇu with four faces. These faces are Narasiṁha, Kāpila, Varāha and Saumya.

According to another version, the *kāpila-mukha* has been substituted by *strī-mukha*. These faces are

1. *Elements*, Vol I, Pt 2, App, p 64 (37).
2. *VDH*, 47, 10-17 (31).
3. Joshi N.P., प्राचीन भारतीय मूर्तिविज्ञान, पटना, 1977, pp 86, 163-64.
4. *Elements*, Vol I, Pt 2, Texts pp 59-60; cited by Agrawala, V.S., Catalogue of the Mathura Museum, *Journal of the U.P. Historical Society*, XXII, p III, *VDH*, III, 44, 11-12.

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interesting. According to the *Rāmāyaṇa*, Brahmā the Creator had taken the form of a boar.[1] In the *Matsya Purāṇa* the boar has been described as creator, guardian and destroyer.[2] Thus in a four-faced image of Viṣṇu the face of a boar may be taken as a symbol for Aniruddha the Creator. The *Viṣṇu-Dharmottara Purāṇa* agrees with this interpretation.[3] The *kāpila*, the "tawny-coloured face", may stand for Pradyumna or Kāmadeva, who has been described as red in colour.[4] The lion face, or the ferocious one, can easily be taken for *Kāla* or Balarāma,[5] and the *Saumya* face is of course that of Vāsudeva, who has often been called Sāttvika.

It is equally interesting to note the different *āyudhas* to be held by the eight-armed Viṣṇu. According to the *Viṣṇu-Dharmottara Purāṇa*, the *āyudhas* are bow and arrow, shield and sword (*akṣa* seems to be a misprint for *asi*, mention of which is necessary with shield) and pestle and plough. I agree with Dr Priyabala Shah in reading *chīra* as *sīra*.[6]

The reading of the words denoting the fourth pair of *āyudhas* is very doubtful. Taking into consideration

1. *Rāmāyaṇa*, Ayodhyā Kāṇḍa, 110, 4.
2. *Matsya*, 247, 24-27.
3. *VDH*, III, 47, 17 (31).
4. *Abhilaṣitārtha Chintāmaṇi*, Mysore, 1926, verse 853, p 272.
5. According to the *Kūrma Purāṇa* (28) Saṅkarṣaṇa is Kāla or Śiva or Śeṣa. The Jaina works call Balarāma Narasiṁha (46). According to the passage cited (*VDH*, III, 44, 11) the face of the lion should be to the right. In a four-armed figure of Viṣṇu from Mathura (Pl 19) Balarāma appears exactly over the right shoulder of Viṣṇu.
6. Shah, Priyabala, *VDH* III Khaṇḍa, Baroda, 1961, p 141, fn 1 (30).

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a similar passage in the *purāṇa*[1] just discussed, it should be āditya and chandra. Chandra is in the existing reading, but āditya has to be substituted for *ādayaḥ* in verse 12. With this change I would read the line as "*bāṇāsi musalodityaḥ*" or, to avoid a slight mistake in metre, "*bāṇāsi musaloraviḥ*".[2]

However, the point of interest is that the eight-armed form of Viṣṇu was regarded as a combination of the four *vyūhas* of Viṣṇu. Though we come across this text in about the 6th century AD, the theory must have been still older as three specimens of the images of eight-armed Viṣṇu attributed to the Kuṣāṇa period coming from Mathura are already known to us.[3] In this period, another type of *chatur-vyūha* Viṣṇu figure was current. Unfortunately, only a solitary specimen is available (Pl 19) and that too is broken, but whatever remains is sufficient to prove its *vyūha* aspect.[4] We shall refer to it again as it is a curious combination of *vyūha* and *avatāra* forms.

Brahmanical Tradition

In its mythological garb, the *vyūha* theory took a somewhat different shape. Vāsudeva and Balarāma came to be known as two brothers with separate mothers, and Pradyumna as the son of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa and Aniruddha as his grandson born of Pradyumna. Vāsudeva's *chakra, gadā* and Bala-

1. Cmp *VDH*, III, 47, 11 and 44, 12, Sanskṛt Text, Baroda, 1958, pp 165 and 159 (30).
2. (30).
3. MM No 15, 1010; 50, 3550. The third one is in the Lucknow Museum—Joshi N.P., *Catalogue of Brahmanical Sculptures in the State Museum*, Lucknow, Pt 1, 1972, Fig 1 (49, 247).
4. +17.

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rāma's *hala-mūsala* are well known, but Pradyumna and Aniruddha have also been described as masters of the art of wielding bow and arrow and sword and shield respectively.[1]

The *Mahābhārata* tells[2] us how Rudra ordered Viṣṇu to get himself incarnated with other *devatās* on earth. Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa thereupon plucked two of his hairs – one white and the other black, which in due course entered the wombs of Rohiṇī and Devakī, two women of Yadu's race. They subsequently gave birth to Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa.

Further, it has been observed at another place[3] that the elder brother, to be known as Halī or Bala, would be the incarnation of Dharādhara, that is Ananta or Śeṣa, the cosmic serpent. The *Pañcharātras* believed that Saṅkarṣaṇa is the *tāmasī* form of Viṣṇu functioning as destroyer (*Kāla*).[4] The *Padma Purāṇa* expresses a similar view.[5]

The association of Balarāma with the cosmic serpent is thus responsible for the snake hoods seen in many of his figures. The all-destroying or *tāmasī* nature of Balarāma was also responsible for habits such as drinking, gambling, wrestling, boxing and many other activities conducive to destruction. A person addicted to them believes in direct action, but not much in diplomacy.

1. *MBH*, Vana, 120, 11; 120, 18.
2. *MBH*, Ādi, 196, 32-33 (3).
3. *MBH*, *Anuśāsana*, 147, 54-60 (10).
4. (28).
5. *Padma*, VI 229, 38-39, p 791

संकर्षणो महाविष्णुः विद्याबल समन्वितः
कालस्य सर्वभूतानां रुद्रस्य च यमस्य च
अन्तर्यामित्वमास्थाय जगत्संहरते प्रभुः ॥

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In the *purāṇas* and the epics, Balarāma's role is hardly that of a diplomat. His killing of Sūta Lomaharṣaṇa,[1] slaying of Rukmī when gambling,[2] shaking the capital of the Kauravas,[3] pulling the Yamunā off course merely to bathe in,[4] and such other deeds support this statement. In iconography, he is usually seen carrying a cup of wine. His wife Revatī is sometimes seen accompanying him with a wine jar.[5]

Popularity of Nāga Worship

The theory that Balarāma is an incarnation of Nāga might have got further impetus from the followers of the Nāga cult because this conferred superiority on their deity. Nāga worship enjoyed a very wide popularity in folk culture of India. Its existence in India can be traced from the Indus Valley Period.

Not only the Brāhmaṇas but the Buddhists and the Jainas also gave a prominent, though subordinate, place to the Nāgas in their respective pantheons. As is clear from Kauṭilya's *Arthaśāstra*, Nāga worship was popular in Mauryan times.[6] The panels from Bharhut, Sanchi, Amaravati show Nāgas in their human or serpentine forms. Mathura was another important centre of the Nāga cult. Anthropomorphic representations of Nāgas at Mathura are to be found from as early as the 3rd century BC (Pl 1).

1. *Bhāgavata*, Gita Press Ed, X, 78, 22-28.
2. *Harivamśa*, Viṣṇu, 61, 54.
3. *Harivamśa*, 46, 32-34.
4. *Harivamśa*, 46, 32-34.
5. ++6, 10, 17, MM No U 98 (27), (19).
6. *Arthaśāstra*, 5, 2, 49; 51-52; 13, 1, 10; 13, 2, 26, etc.

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Archaeological excavations at Sonkh, near Mathura, in 1966-74 have brought to light two Nāga temples which according to the excavator, Prof Härtel, can safely be placed in the first half of the 1st century BC.[1] We hear of a temple of Dadhikarṇa Nāga at Mathura which existed in the Śaka era 26, corresponding to AD 104.[2] This *devakula* of Dadhikarṇa Nāga is further mentioned in another inscription dated the year 70 (AD 148).[3]

A tank on the bank of which a colossal Nāga in anthropomorphic form (Pls 3, 4) was enshrined has been referred to in a Kuṣāṇa inscription dated the year 40 (AD 118).[4] The iconographical evidence of Nāga worship in the Gupta and mediaeval periods is comparatively limited. Perhaps independent Nāga deities were assimilated in the ever-growing Brahmanic pantheon. This practice started in the Kuṣāṇa period.

The earliest Nāga figures (Pl 1) portray him with a big snake without coils crowning his head. This figure, standing with one knee slightly bent, is bulky and somewhat potbellied. The earliest figure of Balarāma (Pl 7) in stone, which seems to be slightly later in date than the Nāga just referred to, is similar so far as bulkiness of body and posture are concerned. A well-developed independent formula for Balarāma was yet to come into existence.

1. H. Härtel, Some Results of the Excavations at Sonkh, *German Scholars on India*, II, 1976, pp 94-95.
2. Janert K.L. (Ed) *Lüder's Mathura Inscriptions*, Göttingen, 1961, pp 61-63.
3. *Ibid*, p 70.
4. *Ibid*, pp 173-74.

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Among the Jainas

Starting from Achala and ending with Rāma, the Jainas recognise nine Balarāmas or Balabhadras as we have already seen. According to them, Balabhadra is always the elder brother of Nārāyaṇa, who is *ardhachakravartin* though born of different mothers.

All these Balabhadras perform penance and ascend to the higher world, while Nārāyaṇa does not get that high status immediately. In all their forms both the Balabhadras and Nārāyaṇas assume the same qualities and emblems and perform similar deeds, but their parents, birthplaces and Prati-Nārāyaṇas differ in each case.

The commentary on the *Samavāyāṅga Sūtra* gives full details about the form and appearance of all the Nārāyaṇas and Balabhadras.[1] It often throws a welcome light on their iconographic features. Similar to the Hindu canons, the tight bead string (*ekāvalī*), *vanamālā*, blue garments, palm standard, usual weapons, handsome features and bright earrings worn by Balabhadra have been well described.

Antiquity of Images and Temples

Fortunately, literary and epigraphical evidence help us a good deal in establishing the antiquity of the images and temples of this god. The oldest passage referring to the worship of Baladeva and Vāsudeva is to be found in the Pālī work *Niddesa*,[2] a commentary on the *Sūttanipāta*, which may be

1. (46).
2. *Vaiṣṇavism*, p 3, *Lokadharma*, p 6, fn 1—सन्तेके समण ब्राह्मणा वतसुद्धिका। ते हत्थिवतिका होन्ति । अस्स-गो-कुक्कुर-काक-वासुदेव-बलदेव-पुण्णभद्द.... दिसा वतिका होन्ति । The word *vatika* is Sanskṛt, *vratika* in the sense of a worshipper.

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attributed to about the 4th century BC. A list of different sects and their main deities has been given, and both Vāsudeva and Baladeva are mentioned in them. This would be followed chronologically by a passage in *Arthaśāstra*,[1] wherein Kauṭilya refers to the persons worshipping Saṅkarṣaṇa as their *daivatā*. The next passage comes from Patañjali.[2] While referring to the Sūtra II, 2, 34 (*alpāt-chaturau*) the grammarian refers to the temples of Dhanapati (Kubera), Rāma (Balarāma) and Keśava (Vāsudeva), where various kinds of musical instruments were played in the assemblage of worshippers.

Saṅgama literature from South India also refers to this deity.[3] It is observed that Balarāma, an extremely mighty person, was of white complexion, like milk or a conch. He was fond of blue garments, red or white *kadamba* wreaths, and wore only one earring. He had participated in the *Kuravai* dance with his younger brother Kṛṣṇa and Piṇṇai, Kṛṣṇa's beloved. The plough or *nāñjila* was his weapon, and the symbol on his standard was a palm. Apart from Kṛṣṇa, Sūrya, Śiva, Kāma and Sāma were quite close to Balarāma. The Saṅgama literature refers also to the independent temples of Balarāma.

The most important epigraphic record comes from Ghosuṇḍi, a village in Rajasthan.[4] In the script

1. संकर्षण दैवतीयो वा... *Arthaśāstra*, 13, 3, 70, Ganapati Śāstri's Ed, Pt III, p 199.
2. *Development*, p 338.
3. Champaka-lakshmi R., Vaiṣṇava Concept in Early Tamil Nadu, *Journal of Indian History*, Vol L, Pt 3, December 1972, New Series, No 150, pp 739, 734, 736.
4. Agrawala V.S., प्राचीन माध्यमिका की नारायण वाटिका, सेठ कन्हैयालाल पोद्दार अभिनन्दन ग्रन्थ, मथुरा, पृ 899-902.

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of the 2nd century BC, the construction of Nārāyaṇa-Vāṭikā for the worship of Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva has been recorded. Another inscription comes from the village of Mora to the west of Mathura city.[1] It refers to a stone shrine (*śaila-devagṛha*) built in the time of Mahākṣatrapa Śodāsa and containing the images of Bhāgavata Vṛṣṇi Pañchavīras.

Dr J.N. Banerjea has shown that these were Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Sāmba.[2] This view is supported by *Aṅgavijjā*, a Jaina work of the Kuṣāṇa period,[3] which refers under *deva-namāni* to the same group—Kaṇṇho (Kṛṣṇa), Rāmo (Balarāma), Sāmbo (Sāmba), Pajjaṇṇo (Pradyumna) and Pussa (Puruṣa, another name of Aniruddha).

In another contemporary inscription from Mathura,[4] mention has been made of a shrine (*mahāsthāna*) of "*Bhāga . . . va*". The passage has generally been read as *Bhagavato Vāsudevasya*, but that it stands for *Bhagavato Baladevasya* cannot be totally discarded. These inscriptions from Mathura belong to about the 1st century BC. Another contemporary record from South India, the Nānāghāt cave inscription of Nāganikā, names Saṅkarṣaṇa-Vāsudeva along with other deities.[5]

In the light of this evidence, it is natural to come across a good number of images of Balarāma from early times.

1. MM No Q I; Janert, *Mathura Inscriptions*, p 154.
2. Banerjea J.N., The Pañchavīras of Vṛṣṇis, *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, X, 1962, pp 65-68.
3. *Aṅgavijjā*, Chapter 26, p 158.
4. MM No 367; *Mathura Inscriptions*, p 155.
5. Sircar D.C., *Select Inscriptions*, No 82, p 186.

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Balarāma on Coins

Excavations at Ai-Khanum, along the border of the Soviet Union with Afghanistan, conducted by Mr P. Bernard of a French archaeological delegation, brought to light six rectangular bronze coins issued by the Indo-Greek ruler Agathocles (about 180-165 BC) [1] These coins, bearing legends in the Greek and Brāhmī scripts, show Viṣṇu or Vāsudeva carrying a *chakra* and a pear-shaped vase (actually a conch, *udgra śaṅkha*)[2] on the reverse. The obverse, along with the king's name in Greek, depicts a two-handed Saṅkarṣaṇa carrying a club (*gadā*) in his right hand and a plough (*hala*) in his left (Fig 1a). Both brothers are dressed as warriors and have sheathed swords hanging from their belts.

Another interesting coin with a symbolic representation of Balarāma is the silver issue of Vṛṣṇi-Rājanya Gaṇa of about the 1st century BC.[3] It shows a pillar in railing topped by a composite animal figure consisting of the fore-parts of a lion and an elephant with a three-pronged symbol over its head (Fig 1b). A *chakra* appears on the reverse. As I shall refer to this coin again, suffice to say here that Balarāma belonged

1. Narain A.K., Two Hindu Divinities on the Coins of Agathocles from Ai-Khanum, *Journal of the Numismatic Society of India*, XXXV, 1973, pp 73-77, Pl VII 1-2.
   Also Agrawal P.K., *Early Indian Bronzes*, Varanasi, 1977 (The negative has been reversed, hence the attributes in the hand and suspended sword appear to have changed places.)
2. Cmp *ūrdhva-śaṅkha*, held by Balarāma, referred to in a late source (40).
3. Allan J., *Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India*, 1936, Pl XVI 5, p 281, Introduction.

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to the Vṛṣṇi clan and the lion was associated with him.

Symbolic Representation of Balarāma on Clay Seals

Ten clay seals collected from Sunet (ancient Sunetra) in Ludhiana district, Punjab, by Swami Omanand Saraswati of Jhajjhara Museum[1] show the same composite animal, the elephant-lion, but this time it stands on the ground. Along with this, the appearance of pestle, club and wheel, and a conch in five seals, create additional interest. The Brāhmī legend on the seals clearly indicates that they belong to the *mahā-senāpatis* of Vṛṣṇi-Rājanya Gaṇa.

The composite animal and the four emblems obviously stand for the two deities Vāsudeva and Saṅkarṣaṇa. According to the author, the seals belong palaeographically to the Gupta age, about the 5th century AD.

Other Symbolic Representations of Balarāma

In the light of the Vṛṣṇi-Rājanya coin and seals and the literary evidence of palm standards (*tāla-dhvaja*) in the *Vālmikīya Rāmāyaṇa*,[2] as well as the lion-plough of Balarāma mentioned in *Harivaṁśa* and seen in his figures it is worthwhile noting the two pillar capitals from Mathura.

First is the palm capital preserved in the State Museum, Lucknow (SML No J 584 Pl 5). In about the 1st century BC, this must have crowned a pillar in its complete shape. This sort of pillar

1. स्वामी ओमानन्द सरस्वती, वृष्णि राजन्यगण के मुद्रांक, *JNSI*, XXXV, 1973, pp 95-100, Pls X-XI.
2. (1), (2).

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was a symbol of Balarāma, who was called *Tāladhvaja* and *Tālāṅka*. Worship of pillars in honour of respective deities (*cheīya-khamba chaitya-stambha*) was known in Mathura right from the Śuṅga times. Worship of a lion pillar on a corner upright (SML, J 268) and a lion and an elephant on some *āyāgapaṭṭas* from Mathura (SML, J 252, J 249) are a few instances. Mathura was a major centre of the Balarāma cult and it would therefore not be improbable to believe that the palm capital and its pillar marked a place sacred to Balarāma.

The lion-plough capital from Mathura, now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (Pl 6),[1] is dated to about the 2nd century AD and described as a "winged lion with serpent tail". It creates a special interest when studied in the light of the lion-plough (*siṁha-lāṅgala*) Balarāma holds in some contemporary images. It is definitely a big (height 88.9 cm) winged lion with fine decorations and a pointed tail forming the blade of a plough.

Attributes and emblems of deities are often used as symbols on their standards. The *chakra* of Viṣṇu and the *triśūla* of Śiva often appear on their respective *dhvajas*. So is the cock pillar of Kārtikeya reported to have been found at Lālā Bhagat in Kanpur district.[2] The present lion capital should therefore be taken as a symbolic representation of Balarāma.

Images of Balarāma

Sculpturally, the Balarāma images go back to

1. *Indian Art*, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 1969, Pl 2; Vögel J.Ph., *La Sculpture de Mathura*, 1930, Pl XXV.
2. *Archaeological Survey of India, Annual Reports*, 1929-30, pp 132-33, Pl G.

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about the 2nd century BC. Three such figures, from Mathura, Varanasi and Gwalior respectively, are known. In the Kuṣāṇa period, his worship reached its zenith, but with the Guptas independent figures of him diminished in number.

In mediaeval and late mediaeval times, he appeared mostly as a subordinate deity or as one among the ten incarnations of Viṣṇu. It is possible to trace the regular evolution of the Balarāma images as has been tabulated at the end of this chapter. The main points of their classification may be noted as follows.

Of the earliest figures attributed to the Śuṅga age, only the following four are known:

(a) A two-armed Balarāma from Janasutī near Mathura (Pl 7).
(b) A two-armed Balarāma from Tumain in the former Gwalior State (Pl 8c).
(c) Another Balarāma from Tumain (Pls 8a, 8b).
(d) A bust of Balarāma from Varanasi, now in the Bharat Kala Bhavana (Pl 9).

All these images have snake canopies on their heads and wherever hands are preserved they carry plough and mace or pestle.

Balarāma appears to have become a popular deity in the Kuṣāṇa period. His images are therefore found in larger numbers. They may be grouped broadly under three heads:

(a) Those without a snake canopy.
(b) Those with a snake canopy.
(c) Jaina Baladeva figures, often with folded hands.

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Some of these classes may be further subdivided on the basis of their hands, attributes and associated deities.

Following are the main figures belonging to the first type:

(i) Balarāma on the *pañchavīra paṭṭa* from Kondamotu in Guntur district, Andhra Pradesh.[1] Here he is two-handed and carries a mace and lion-plough.

(ii) Balarāma, headless, four-armed and carrying lion-plough (MM, 17, 1325, Pls 16, 17).

(iii) Balarāma, four-armed, with Ekānamśā and Kṛṣṇa in the form of four-handed Viṣṇu (MM, 67, 529, Pl 14).

This type is sometimes also seen in the mediaeval period. Balarāma seen with Gaja-Lakṣmī, from Rajasthan,[2] and a Pāla Viṣṇu image in the State Museum, Lucknow,[3] are examples.

Among the figures belonging to the second type, that is with prominent snake canopy, head, a unique figure may be taken into account at the outset.

This figure, now on display in Mathura Museum (14, 392-95, Pl 19), was formerly taken to be that of Indra,[4] but in the course of my study at the

1. Sastri T.V.G., A Stone Railing from Kunidane, Guntur District, *Journal of the Indian Society of Orieutal Art*, New Series, Vol II, Pl V, Fig 2; Joshi N.P., प्राचीन भारतीय मूर्तिविज्ञान, Patna, 1977, p 90.
2. Agrawala R.C., Unpublished Temples of Rajasthan, *Arts Asiatiques*, 1965, Tome XI, Fascicule 2, Fig 26, ++9.
3. SML, No H 106, +37.
4. For detailed discussion of this sculpture see Agrawala V.S., A Catalogue of the Images of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva in Mathura Art, *Journal of the UP Historical Society*, 1949. Vol XXII, pp 144-45, +17.

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museum I found it to be a figure of Viṣṇu. Shri R.C. Agrawala, now Director of Museums and Archaeology, Rajasthan, examined the sculpture and agreed with me.[1]

In its present condition, the image shows three figures, of which the central one, with high *mukuṭa* and a circular mark between the eyebrows,[2] has four hands. In a right hand, it holds a *gadā* upside down, a style seen in some other contemporary Viṣṇu figures.[3] The normal right hand is raised to the shoulder in *abhayamudrā*, a very common feature of all Kuṣāṇa deities. In his normal left he holds an object like a *śaṅkha*. The *vanamālā* seen round his neck is interesting. This central figure is obviously of Viṣṇu or Vāsudeva. From his right shoulder springs Saṅkarṣaṇa, his next *vyūha-mūrti*, but the point of interest is that he is portrayed here as a snake deity. He is two-handed and holds a flask of wine in his left hand while his right hand, with open palm, is stretched over his head. The deity has a

1. Agrawala R.C., Four-Faced Śiva and Four-Faced Viṣṇu at Mathura, *Vishveshvaranand Indological Journal*, Hoshiarpur, III, Pt 1. p 3.
2. This mark has often been called *ūrṇā*, one of the 32 auspicious marks borne by the Buddha, but it need not necessarily be taken as Buddhist. In the *Mahābhārata*, Princess Damayantī has been described as having "a mark between her eyebrows from her very birth". The mark, a sign of future prosperity, looked like a lotus flower (*Mahābhārata*, Vana, 69, 5-9). In the Mathura sculptures of the Kuṣāṇa period, it is seen on the forehead of Viṣṇu (MM 34, 2487), Sūrya (MM 12, 269), Kārtikeya (MM 42, 2949), Balarāma (MM 14, 406), Kubera (MM C 30), Lakṣmī (*Ibid*), Vasudhārā (MM 18, 14, 11) and others.
3. MM 39, 2858; 15, 933.

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snake canopy. This form of Saṅkarṣaṇa became very popular in Kuṣāṇa times (cmp Pl 20).

In this sculpture, the third *vyūha-mūrti* is behind Vāsudeva and is seen over his shoulders. It is two-armed, and the right hand, now partly mutilated, seems to have been raised in the *abhaya* pose just like Vāsudeva. In his left hand there is a small object which has a handlelike appearance.

Dr Ananda Coomaraswamy thought it was a thunderbolt (*vajra*), but it probably belonged to a small dagger, suggesting that the image was that of Aniruddha, the fourth *vyūha-mūrti*.[1] The figure might have been that of Pradyumna or Kāmadeva, independent images of whom are known to have been found in contemporary Mathura art.

Thus this figure of *chaturvyūha* Viṣṇu, which can be placed about the 2nd or 3rd century AD, is very interesting.

Other Figures with Snake Canopy

Independent images of Kuṣāṇa Saṅkarṣaṇa as described above are not uncommon. Attributes are generally absent, but in one instance they too have been shown on the back slab (MM C 19+29, Pl 18). In the Gupta period, two extra hands and plough and mace were added to this form (SML J 89 Pl 25, J 217, etc) and perhaps the Jainas were responsible for this. Dr Vōgel has pointed out in *Serpent Lore* that this two-handed form with snake canopy became very popular and people at Mathura continued to adopt it even in mediaeval

1. (31) verse 13.

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and post-mediaeval times.[1]

Images of Jaina Baladeva

I have already pointed out that the existence of nine Baladevas has been accepted in the Jaina pantheon and that their images have also been referred to. For example, the Āvaśyaka Malayagiri (I) refers to a Baladeva-*pratimā* enshrined in Āvartagrāma.[2] In sculpture right from the Kuṣāṇa age, one can see images of the ninth Baladeva, Rāma, standing beside the 22nd teacher Neminātha (Pls 10, 11). In these sculptures, Baladeva may be easily recognised by his five-hooded snake canopy. He stands in a pose of adoration (*namaskāramudrā*) in the Kuṣāṇa sculptures and generally has only two hands (MM 34, 2488; SML J 47, J 60, etc). The corresponding figure is always Vāsudeva.

In the Gupta and mediaeval figures of Neminātha, Balarāma assumes a four-handed form and appears with his weapons and usual snake canopy (Pls 24, 25). In the mediaeval figures, there is hardly any distinction between the Jaina and Brahmanical Balarāma.

Evolution of the Balarāma Image

In brief, the evolution of Balarāma figures may be described as follows:

(i) The earliest stage is represented by symbols of the deity in the form of weapons, elephant-

1. Vögel J.Ph., *Indian Serpent Lore.*
2. *Abhidhāna Rājendra,* V, p 1288, *Baladeva paḍimā.*

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lion figures, palm capital and lion-plough capital (Fig 1b, Pls 5, 6).

(ii) In the case of figure sculptures, the opening stage shows a simple Nāga deity in the anthropomorphic form of the Śuṅga period holding plough and pestle or mace (Pl 7).

(iii) The Kuṣāṇa period portrays him in different versions such as:

(a) Four-handed without snake canopy and generally carrying mace and plough. This form is often seen in the Kuṣāṇa Ekānamśā group (Pls 14, 15).

(b) Two-handed with snake canopy, right hand with open palm stretched overhead, left holding a wine cup. No pestle or plough (Pls 20-23). This is the most popular version.

(c) Similar to (b) but with weapons in the background (Pl 18).

(d) Two-handed with canopy, right hand raised to the shoulder in *abhayamudrā*, left holding plough (Nand and Patna figures, ++24, ++26).

(e) Two-handed Jaina Baladeva with snake hoods in *namaskāramudrā* (Pl 10).

(iv) In the Gupta period, Balarāma is generally seen with four hands and bears a snake canopy. In other words, this is an assimilation of two of the Kuṣāṇa types (a) and (b) (Pls 24, 25).

(v) In mediaeval times, both four-handed and two-handed types remained in vogue. They have snake canopies of five hoods, or three or

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even one,[1] but a noteworthy difference is that the hand with open palm stretched overhead is suspended (*pralamba*) in various postures.

Attributes like plough, pestle, mace, wine cup and conch are included according to the sculptor's will (Pls 30-34 . Besides, subordinate deities such as Nāgas (+32), devotees (+33) and attendants (++12, ++13) have also been introduced.

These Baladeva figures are independent in a few cases, but they generally appear to represent the eighth incarnation of Viṣṇu in his *avatāra-paṭṭikā*.

(vi) In a few mediaeval figures Balarāma is seen with deities like Ekānamśā (SML, G 58, Pl 28), Gaja-Lakṣmī[2] or his wife Revatī[3], who is shown embracing him[4] or standing by his side.

The classification tables showing various types of Balarāma images on pages 58-63 are likely to be found further useful.

1. There might be a few exceptions to this, for example Balarāma on a Pāla Viṣṇu figure in the State Museum, Lucknow (H 106, Pl 31).
2. Agrawala R.C., Unpublished Temples of Rajasthan, *Arts Asiatiques*, 1965, Tome XI, Fascicule 2, Fig 26.
3. Agrawala R.C., Some Unpublished Sculptures of Baladeva from Rajasthan, *Journal of Indian History*, XXXIX, Pt 1, Fig 2.
4. ++6, ++10, ++17.

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3

Special Features of Balarāma Figures

This account of Balarāma's iconography cannot be deemed complete unless we consider some of its special aspects at some length. Here are a few of them.

Serpent

It has already been stated that although serpent hoods are not shown in an earlier version of Balarāma they are indispensable in the *avatāra* form despite the fact that a few exceptions may be found in the mediaeval period (Pl 31). The *Mahābhārata* describes Balarāma's head as canopied by several serpents with imposing bodies (*ābhoga*).[1] Harivamśa describes them as serpents in Ananta form.[2] Balarāma is often seen in sculptures with a coiled polycephalous snake behind him. This feature in plastic art originates in early Nāga figures.

Human figures with serpent crests seemingly attached to the back of their heads are common at Bharhut, Sanchi and Amaravati among other places. But at Mathura and its suburbs, as is clear from

1. *MBH*, Anuśāsana, 147, 56.
2. (11).

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earlier Nāga figures, not only the crest but the full reptilian form was preferred (Figs 6, 7, 8). Dr Vögel has started discussing Mathura Nāga figures in his learned work on the subject with the Chargaon Nāga of the time of Kuṣāṇa ruler Huviṣka.[1] Dr Vögel wrote his book in 1926, but since then much fresh material has been brought to light and most of it is preserved in the museums at Mathura, Lucknow, Varanasi and other places in India and abroad. A systematic study of the material available to the present writer leads to the following conclusions:

(i) Behind well-clad and suitably ornamented male figures, not only of Nāgas but also of deities associated with them like Balarāma (SML G 215 Pl 7) and Pārśvanātha (SML J 39, J 25 & 113 joined together), there would normally be a polycephalous snake up to the early Gupta period. This justifies literary descriptions such as *parvatābhoga-varṣmā*[2] or *bhogotkarāsana*.[3]

(ii) In early figures, the reptilian part does not necessarily form intertwined coils. For example, the snake at the back of a Nāga figure of the Śuṅga period (Pl 8), perhaps the earliest of its type, shows the body of the snake in a columnlike form with or without simple coils (Figs 4, 5, 6). Very soon, it appears as horizontally intertwined thick coils ending with pointed tail (Pl 4 Figs 7, 8).[4]

1. Vögel J.Ph., *Indian Serpent Lore*, p 42.
2. (9) verse 14.
3. (11) verse 51.
4. MM Nos 17, 1257; 10, 125; etc.

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(iii) Examples of Kuṣāṇa art at Mathura exhibit coiled snakes at the rear as a normal practice, so much so that in the later phase the purpose was taken to be served by merely showing line marks in angular forms.[1]

(iv) The serpent's body was further decorated with certain designs or geometrical patterns to make it appear natural.[2] These patterns included trefoil arches, circlets, eye marks, triangles and triangular marks with curved sides (Figs 8, 9).

(v) These marks cease to appear after the Kuṣāṇa period. Decorations in successive periods are more artistic and natural.

(vi) Serpent hoods assume the form of a nimbus or canopy, called *bhoga-maṇḍala*,[3] round the head of the deity. Dr Vögel has observed that this development was due to the introduction of the halo by the Graeco Buddhist school as a necessary adjunct of Buddha and Bodhisattva figures.[4] This requires reconsideration, for in the light of the early Nāga figures now available to us this nimbus should be regarded as an indigenous characteristic of the early Mathura school appearing much before the introduction of Buddha figures.

(vii) The snake hoods of the Kuṣāṇa period, especially seen on the heads of superior personalities like Balarāma, Pārśvanātha or Nāga

1. MM Nos 17, 1314, SN 228.
2. MM Nos 10, 125, 17, 1314, SN 228, SN 993, etc.
3. *Abhilaṣitārtha Chintāmaṇi*, Pt 1, Mysore, 1926, verse 842, p 270.
4. Vögel J.Ph., *Indian Serpent Lore*, p 142.

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chiefs present another interesting feature. These hoods often bear auspicious symbols on them (Pl 2) such as full vase (*pūrṇaghaṭa*), cross with turned ends (*svastika*), pair of fish (*mīna-yugala*), pair of bowls (*śarāva-samputa*), and branch of a tree (*śrīvatsa*).[1]

At least the *svastika* decorating the head of the Nāga Ananta has been mentioned in the *Harivamśa*, where the deity has been called *svastika-murdhā* and *svastikāyatana*.[2]

(viii) Another special feature is depiction of the fangs emerging from the snake's mouth. They are shown prominently in Kuṣāṇa art (see Pl 21).* The tradition seems to have continued in a few instances up to the early Gupta period. Figures of Balarāma are no exceptions to this.

(ix) Anthropomorphic forms of Nāgas in the Kuṣāṇa period are normally seen with a small goblet in left hand, and the right is raised to

1. Joshi N.P., Use of Auspicious Symbols in Kushana Art at Mathura, *Dr V V. Mirashi Felicitation Volume*, Nagpur, 1965, pp 311-17.

   Since the publication of the above paper the following additional symbols have been noticed:

   (i) Three leaves or buds bound together, perhaps standing for *Kalpavṛkṣa*. It is seen in a Pārśvanātha figure of the Kuṣāṇa period now in Lucknow Museum (No J 39).

   (ii) Circular symbol shaped like a five-petalled crescent, to be seen on one of the hoods of Balarāma image of the Kuṣāṇa period in the same museum (No 57, 457).

2. (11) verse 45, (11) verse 43.

* The word *lelihaḥ*, a synonym for snake used in the *Mahābhārata* (Ādi, 27, 15, p 97) is suggestive of prominent fangs.

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the shoulder in *abhaya*, an attitude of protection.[1] In a few instances, the goblet is absent and the arm is akimbo.[2]

(x) A solitary fragment from Sonkh, Mathura, attributed to the Kuṣāṇa period depicts a Nāga differently. He has a human body, but his face is that of a snake. He carries a manuscript in his hand.[3]

When the image of Balarāma as an incarnation of Śeṣa was directed to be made, contemporary Nāga figures appear to have served as models. But the following changes were introduced:

(i) The left hand, raised to the shoulder in *abhaya* pose, was taken farther over the head in the same attitude.

(ii) The hand which usually held a goblet was raised chest high and held a flask of wine.

(iii) The head sometimes came to be slightly bent to the left (Pl 20),[4] and the rest of the body was bent in three (*tri-bhaṅga*), a pose natural for a snake (Pl 20). The *Harivamśa* refers at two places to Ananta's head slightly turned to the left (*kiñchitsavyāpavṛtta maulin*,[5] *kiñchidāvṛtta mauliḥ*).[6] The three

1. Cmp MM No 10, 125; C 21.
2. MM No 30, 2074.
3. Härtel H., Some Results of the Excavations at Sonkh, *German Scholars on India*, II, pp 69-99 Fig 42.
4. MM No C 15.
5. (11) verse 52.
6. (16) verse 25.

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bends have been described as *trinata* by the *Vaikhānasāgama.*[1]

(iv) There was no change in coils. The *Harivamśa* describes them as *bhujagabhoga.*[2] In the later Kuṣāṇa and subsequent periods, Nāga coils are shown in the frontal background as well. Gradually, much importance came to be attached to the foreground, and the reptile form is very rarely seen at the back of Balarāma in the Gupta period.

More importance was attached to the coils in front, but these too were not considered indispensable. The same attitude prevailed in mediaeval times, but the snake hood overhead remained a common feature.

Balarāma and the Serpent Deity Ananta

Ananta is the name of an important serpent deity and is also a synonym of Viṣṇu. The *Bhāgavadgītā* assimilates both theories when it tells us that Kṛṣṇa is Ananta among the Nāgas.[3] The *Harivamśa* describes him as the deity of the Bhāgavata cult (*Bhāgavata deva*)[4] who was to be worshipped with Bhāgavata *mantras.*[5] Akrura, a *Yādava* of Mathura, belonged to this sect and was addressed as *dharmiṣṭha.*[6]

Association of Ananta with water was well established, and as he was a serpent deity this was natural. That is why Akrura decided to worship

1. (38).
2. (16) verse 28.
3. *Gītā*, X 29—'अनन्तश्चास्मि नागानाम्'.
4. *Harivamśa*, Viṣṇu, 26, 49-64.
5. *Ibid*, 27, 43.
6. *Ibid*, 27, 47.

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Ananta in the waters of the Yamunā.

It appears that the superhuman acts of Kṛṣṇa led to his association with Viṣṇu, and similarly Balarāma came to be associated with Ananta.[1] That is why several characteristics and emblems attributed to Ananta in classical literature are also attributed to Balarāma. Blue garments, single earring, snake canopy, the palm standard of gold, and plough and pestle are some of them.[2]

Headgear

None of the iconographical canons clearly prescribe a *uṣṇīṣa* or *mukuṭa* for Balarāma. The early canons lay down that he should be depicted like Viṣṇu.[3] To some extent this presupposes the existence of a *mukuṭa*, but on the other hand some sources like *Vaikhānasāgama* and *Pratimā Lakṣaṇa* clearly observe that Balarāma's hair should be bunched above his head (*udbaddha-kuntala*)[4] or arranged conically (*kuṭilāṅkṛta-śiroruhaḥ*).[5] The *Harivaṁśa* at one place mentions his gold crest (*hemachūli*).[6] It also says that a crown (*mauli*)—the word stands for both head and crown—was presented to him by Lakṣmī, who had brought it from the abode of Varuṇa.[7] According to the Jaina *Harivaṁśa*, the credit for presenting a *mukuṭa* goes to Kubera.[8]

1. Description of Balarāma in *Brahma Purāṇa*, 50, 46; 56, 24; *MBH*, Anuśāsana, 147, 58.
2. *Harivaṁśa*, Viṣṇu, 26, 43-51.
3. (40), (41).
4. (38).
5. (39) verse 38.
6. (11) verse 52.
7. (14) verse 31.
8. (48) verse 36.

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When we turn to the sculptures, none of the early ones portray him without headgear. He wears a turban in the Śuṅga pieces, and a crown in the Kuṣāṇa and Gupta figures. But in some mediaeval pieces he is bareheaded (Pls 35, 36). In one instance (Pl 33), his hair has been arranged in three crests (*triśikha*), a style often seen in images of Kārtikeya. In other instances, his hair is done in a topknot (Pl 31).

Balarāma's headgear in the Kuṣāṇa period deserves special notice. Comparison of a good number of images of this period shows that, like the high crown of Indra, a special sort of *mukuṭa* has been associated with this deity. This was flat and caplike, and decorated with a large heartshaped crest in the centre. Each side of the central crest has one additional leaflike decoration. The complete design gives an idea of triple crests.

Earring

It is very interesting to note that, unlike other deities, Balarāma wore only one earring. This is amply supported by literary tradition[1] and sculpture. The *Harivamśa* mentions that his *kuṇḍala* was of gold studded with diamonds.[2] This ornament was a present from Lakṣmī,[3] and he wore it on his left ear.[4] The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* also refers to this fact.[5] His shining *kuṇḍala* has been referred to in the *Samavāyāṅga Sūtra* of the Jainas.[6] Among the icono-

1. (39), (21) verse 15; (11), (15) verse 80; (16) verse 25.
2. (14) verse 32.
3. (14) verse 32, (21) verse 15.
4. (17) verse 3.
5. (18) verse 38; (21) verse 17; (45) verse 22.
6. (46).

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graphical canons, *Bṛhatsamhitā* lays down that Balarāma should have one earring. The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* mentions earrings[1] without giving the exact number.[2]

In the Śuṅga period sculpture of Balarāma from Mathura (Pl 7) a *kuṇḍala* has been very prominently shown on the left ear. The sculptors of the Kuṣāṇa period have also followed the tradition very faithfully. In all the images of this period, Balarāma is generally seen with one *kuṇḍala* in his left lobe (Pls 12, 13, 15, 20). An image from Kukragram (Pl 20) depicts a more interesting feature: the single earring has a thick central bead shaped like a seated lion.

This one *kuṇḍala* tradition does not seem to have been strictly followed in later times. In three pieces of the Gupta period,[3] it is visible (Pl 25), but it appears to have been gradually given up. Many mediaeval sculptures show him putting on ear ornaments in both ears.

Ekāvali

A tight necklace in the early periods and a string of single beads in the Kuṣāṇa and post-Kuṣāṇa eras is commonly seen round Balarāma's throat. Its existence has been referred to by the *Samavāyāṅga Sūtra* as *ekāvali-kaṇṭha-layiya-vachcha.*[4]

Garland (Vanamālā)

Another interesting feature of Balarāma, which

1. (39).
2. *VDH*, Chapter 65, verse 2 just mentions *sarvābharaṇadhāriṇam.*
3. MM Nos 17, 1334; 18, 1399; Lucknow Museum, No J 89.
4 (46)

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puts him on par with Viṣṇu, is his floral garland or *vanamālā*. Most classical Hindu writings mention this garland (*vanamālā-kuloraskaḥ*,[1] *vanamālā-vibhusitam*,[2] *vanamālāñchitadoraḥ*,[3] *vanamālī*).[4] In explaining the allegorical meaning of different attributes of Balarāma, the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* says[5] that the *vanamālā* shows that the cosmic serpent balances the entire globe, "full of forests and mountains", on his head, the word *vana* standing for forests and *mālā* for series. Mythologically speaking, this was also a present to Balarāma made by the goddess Lakṣmī according to the *Harivamśa*,[6] and by Kubera according to the *Jaina Purāṇa*[7] along with many other things. The *Samavāyāṅga* calls it *varamālā*.[8]

There is no unanimity concerning the exact sense of the word. Literally, it means a garland of forest flowers. The *Samavāyāṅga* explains it as "a long garland of different fragrant flowers blossoming in all the seasons."[9] According to the *Harivamśa* this is a *mālā* of the flowers of *arjuna*, *kadamba*, *nīpa* and *kandala* trees.[10] Another version in a modern daily, *Pujā-paddhati*, describes it as a garland of *tulasī* leaves, along with the flowers of *kunda*, *mandāra*, *abja* (lotus) and *pārijāta*. It has sometimes been described as "a long garland reaching the

1. (39) verse 36.
2. (18) verse 37.
3. (15) verse 79.
4. (5) verse 50.
5. (32) verse 6.
6. (21) verse 16.
7. (48) verse 36
8. (46).
9. (46)
10. *HVS*, Viṣṇu, 11, 8.

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knees, made of all seasoned flowers with a central pendant of thick *kadamba* bunches."[1]

Vaijayantī is another name for *vanamālā* as worn by Balarāma.[2] According to the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*,[3] it is made of five different gems—emerald, pearl, bluestone, ruby and diamond. Balarāma has also been described as wearing a garland of lotus flowers.[4] At other places it has been observed that he wore a golden garland (*mālā*).[5] Garlands of *kadamba* as well as *mayūra* (Hindi *morpankhī*), perhaps of flowers and leaves respectively, have also been associated with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.[6]

Gradual development of *vanamālā* may be noticed in sculptures. In early images of Viṣṇu,[7] Balarāma,[8] and Varāha,[9] it has been shown as a short garland composed of leaves and different flowers resting on the shoulders (Pls 19, 16). Flowers of *kadamba* and lotus and some with round petals may be seen very clearly in some, others show garlands of only lotus (Pl 21).

A long *vanamālā* reaching below the knee is a feature apparent in the later Kuṣāṇa age and fully developed in subsequent ages, in which it takes the

1. Apte V.S., *Sanskrit English Dictionary*, *Vanamālā* has been defined as:

   आजानुलंथिनी माला सर्वर्तु कुसुमोज्ज्वला
   मध्ये स्थूलकदंबाढ्या वनमालेति कीर्तिता ॥

2. (45) verse 22.
3. *Development*, pp 317-18.
4. (21) verse 16; (11) verse 52.
5. (11) verse 52; (45) verse 30.
6. *HVS*, Viṣṇu, 6, 46
7. MM Nos 46, 3245; 49, 3502; 14, 392-95; 34, 2625.
8. MM Nos 17, 1325; 14, 406; C 15, 14-15; 435.
9. Joshi N P., *Mathura Sculptures*, Mathura 1966, Pl 101.

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shape of a well-arranged floral garland with decorative components at equal intervals and fine central pendants. In mediaeval sculptures, *vanamālā* seen on Viṣṇu and Balarāma are more like jewels (Pls 28, 34).

Hands

Iconographic canons describe two forms of Balarāma – two-handed and four-handed. In the Śuṅga sculptures, he is seen with only two, but both forms came into use in the Kuṣāṇa period. Normally, as a *vyūhamūrti*, he has been represented with four hands (Pls 14, 15, 16), but as an anthropomorphic Nāga he has only two hands in this period (Pls 20, 21, etc). In the post-Kuṣāṇa period, the two forms were mixed. Now we find him with four hands along with snake hoods over his head (Pl 25). This became the generally accepted form in mediaeval times except at Mathura and its surroundings, where the old two-handed form with right hand raised overhead continued at times (Pl 35). Even the Jainas, according to whom Balarāma had no connection with either serpents or wine, accepted this as a standard form[1] (Pls 24, 29).

Weapons and Emblems

Iconographical sources agree that Balarāma should have a plough and pestle or mace in his hand. When he is depicted with four hands, he may also hold a conch, lotus, flask of wine and bow, or he may be shown with his left hand uplifted without anything in it (*pralamba-bāhu*).[2]

1. Lucknow Museum Nos J 89, J 121, MM No 37, 2738.
2. (42), (25), (26).

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According to mythology, *hala* and *mūsala* are the original weapons of Ananta.[1] They are also known as *vaiṣṇava-praharanāni*.[2] The *Harivamśa* says they were first made available to Balarāma before his fight with King Jarāsandha of Rājagṛha.[3] *Sunanda* and *Samvartaka* were the respective names of his divine weapons.[4] His *hala*, with a divine garland, has been compared with the king of the serpents.[5] A *hala* sometimes appeared on his standard, and hence he was named *Lāṅgala-dhvaja*.[6]

Jaina tradition names Balarāma's *hala Aparājita*.[7] It was a present to him from Kubera and was included among the five jewels.[8]

The Śuṅga figures of Balarāma have two weapons, but in the Kuṣāṇa period they do not generally appear for some time except where the images have four hands. Instead of them a flask of wine is seen in the left hand while the right hand, with open palm, is raised above the head. This seems to have been a very popular *dhyāna* at Mathura. But some sculptors seem to have thought that the depiction of *hala* and *mūsala* were indispensable for Balarāma and chose to show the weapons in the background (Pl 18).

When the four-handed Balarāma became popular in the Gupta and post-Gupta periods, the addi-

1. (11) verse 49.
2. (12) verse 61.
3. *HVS*, Viṣṇu, 35, 57-60.
4. (12) verse 60.
5. (12) verse 62.
6. *MBH*, Udyoga, 2, 4.
7. (50).
8. (48) verse 36.

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tional hands were used to hold the *hala* and *mūsala* or *gadā*, and sometimes even a *śaṅkha* (Pl 28).

The *mūsala* of Balarāma needs some more consideration. It is normally mentioned along with the *hala*, but in some early sculptures Balarāma seems to carry a clublike object and not a pestle, used to husk paddy. The Śuṅga Balarāma from Mathura holds a short club (Pl 7). The same object, but longer, appears in the Tumain figure[1] and in some four-handed figures of the Kuṣāṇa period (Pls 12, 14) from Mathura.

Compared with contemporary figures of Viṣṇu, this seems the earliest form of *gadā*, which is often held upside down.[2] According to the Purāṇas, Balarāma was a master of *gadā-yuddha*[3] and had trained the Kaurava Duryodhana and Pāṇḍava Bhīmasena in this art.[4] So the appearance of a *gadā* in his hand is quite natural. It agrees with the *Agni Purāṇa*, which describes the two-handed Balarāma as carrying *gadā* and *hala*.[5]

When the weapon shown is a *mūsala*, its shape in some Kuṣāṇa sculptures is interesting. It is shown with tapering halves joined, with a handle in the centre (Pl 16). In some mediaeval pieces it resembles a thick staff (Pls 31, 33).

Lion

In some sculptures of the Śuṅga, Kuṣāṇa and

1. Joshi N.P., प्राचीन भारतीय मूर्तिविज्ञान, Patna 1977, Pl 70.
2. MM Nos 15, 933; 34, 2487.
3. *MBH*, Śalya, 60, 2.
4. For Duryodhana *HVS*, Viṣṇu 62, 14, for Bhīmasena *MBH*, Ādi 138.
5. (26).

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Gupta periods, Balarāma is seen with a plough which has the figure of a lion on top (Pls 9, 12, 25). In another Kuṣāṇa figure from Mathura, a lion decorates the earring of Balarāma (MM C 15, Pl 20). The association of a lion with him is very interesting as this is not strongly supported by classical literature. The available data may be summarised as follows:

(i) *Harivaṁśa* refers at one place[1] to the lion-faced plough (*siṁha-mukha hala*) of Balarāma.

(ii) According to the *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*,[2] Balarāma's plough is the symbol of Kāla the Destroyer. The ferocity implied in the word Kāla is perhaps symbolised by the lion. In Nepal, this symbolism has been achieved with two faces of a crocodile (Pl 36).

(iii) We have already seen that on the coins and seals of Vṛṣṇi-Rājanya *gaṇa*, the two main deities of the clan, Saṅkarṣaṇa and Vāsudeva, have been symbolised by a lion and elephant along with other attributes such as *mūsala*, *chakra*, *gadā* and *śaṅkha*.

(iv) The *Chaturvyūha-mūrti* of Vāsudeva assumed in subsequent times the form of *Vaikuṇṭha-mūrti*. Saṅkarṣaṇa is represented by a lion's face and Pradyumna by that of a boar.

(v) Balarāma has been described at times as Kāla, the cause of utter destruction,[3] Ugra the Fero-

1. *Harivaṁśa*, Viṣṇu, 120, 100, p 705
   हलं सिंहमुखं कस्य वनमाली नियोक्ष्यति ।
   कस्य देहस्तु निर्भिन्नो मेदिनीं यास्यति प्रभो ॥
2. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa*, 47, 14.
3. *Ibid*, 51, 15-17.

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cious[1] and so on, and therefore a lion might have been considered his befitting symbol.

(vi) Jaina literature, though of the late period, throws some indirect light on the issue. The *Jaina Harivamśa Purāṇa*,[2] a work of the Vikrama era—840 (AD 783) gives the following information.

When Rohiṇī, wife of Vāsudeva, was pregnant, she had four dreams. She saw a trumpeting white elephant, a roaring sea, a beautiful moon and a lion, white as the *kunda* flower, entering her mouth. These dreams were common to all nine mothers of the nine Balabhadras.

When Baladeva was practising penance on the peak of Tuṅgagiri, some rulers of the neighbouring regions decided to disturb him. A deity named Siddhārtha saw this, and to check the approaching kings created a number of lions, who surrounded Baladeva. Since then Baladeva, or Halī, came to be known as Simhoraska, Narasimha or Simhānuchara.[3]

(vii) When fighting with Jarāsandha, Balarāma had used a chariot named Simha-vidyā-ratha.[4]

1. *Brahma Purāṇa*, 50, 50.
2. (47)—It has been often suggested that Saṅkarṣaṇa is the form of Vāsudeva or Viṣṇu. The lion decorating the earring of Balarāma has already been referred to (MM C 15). The Allahabad Museum contains a small head detached from an image of Hari-Hara of about the 7th century AD. The earring on the head depicts the lion motif (Allahabad Museum No 965). The Gwalior Museum, Gujari Mahal, has an image of the Gupta era showing Viṣṇu holding a *gadā* crowned with a lion's head.
3. *Jaina HVS*, 65, 29-32.
4. (49).

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Flask of Wine (Surāmbudhi)

Balarāma's inclination towards wine is well described. According to the *Harivamśa*, he tasted wine for the first time when he was on Gomanta Giri just before the famous *chakra-mūsala* war.[1] It is said that the water accumulated in the hollow of a *kadamba* tree which blossomed in the rainy season had become an intoxicating drink which was highly relished by Balarāma.[2] It came to be known as *kādambarī* wine, and enjoyment of it when he visited Vṛja at an advanced age has been described in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*.[3] Brahmanical literature says Balarāma was addicted to drink. He has often been described as *kādambarī-mada-kṣība*,[4] *ghūrṇiaitānana*,[5] *madasamīrita*,[6] *madirāvilākṣa*,[7] *kādambarī-pānakala*.[8] Hindu iconographic canons decree that he should be depicted as *divyamadotkaṭa*,[9] *madavibhramalochana*[10] or carrying a *surāmbudhi*[11] in his hand. He is said to have a palm standard (*tāladhvaja*),[12] and the juice of the

1. *HVS*, Viṣṇu 41, 6-10, 20-21; 19, 10.
2. (20) verses 4-6.
3. *Ibid.*
4. (15) verse 79.
5. *HVS*, Viṣṇu 46, 29.
6. *Ibid*, 46, 32.
7. *Ibid*, 89, 2.
8. (17) verse 1.
9. (43).
10. (39).
11. (32) verse 4.
12. (45), (11) verse 49. The word *tāla* has been sometimes interpreted as "one which remains at the bottom."

मूलस्थत्त्वाऽदसौ तालः सदातेनाङ्कितः प्रभुः
ततः स एव शेषस्य बलभद्रावतारिणा ॥
अथवा सीरिणः कार्यः सीरमेवध्वजोत्तमम्
ध्वजः सुनिर्मलो कार्यः तस्मात्तालध्वजोमतः ॥

Skanda Purāṇa, Utkala khaṇḍa, 25, 14-15, p 259.

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tala fruit, known as *tāḍī*, is an intoxicant.

In sculptures right from the Kuṣāṇa times, Balarāma is always seen carrying a wine flask. In the opening verse of his play *Svapna-Vāsavadattā*, Bhāsa refers to this *dhyāna* of Balarāma carrying a cup of wine.[1] The use of *bhujau* clearly presupposes the two-handed form.

A wine flask is normally seen in Balarāma's left hand, but in the mediaeval period there are many exceptions to this.[2] The style of holding the flask also varies (Fig 10), mostly perhaps according to the taste and fancy of the sculptor.

Some mediaeval sculptures show Balarāma's wife Revatī with a jar in her hands and standing beside him.[3] Balarāma's drinking wine in her company has also been referred to in literary works.[4] Such images are remindful of some mediaeval figures of Kubera, the God of Wealth, seated with women over wine.

Jaina sources refrain from associating Balarāma with wine, but in their mediaeval sculptures Balabhadra is seen attending the 22nd Tīrthaṅkara Neminātha with a cup of wine in hand.

Standing Pose

Vaikhānasāgama stipulates that the image of

1. उदय नवेन्दु सवर्णावासवदत्ता बलौ बलस्य त्वां पद्मावतीर्णपूर्णौ वसन्तकश्रौ भुजौ पाताम् ॥
2. MM Nos U 98; 37, 2738.
3. Agrawala R.C., Some Unpublished Sculptures of Baladeva from Rajasthan, *Journal of Indian History*, XXXIX, Pt 1.
4. (19), (20); *Śiśupālavadha*, II, 16-17.

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Balarāma should be *trinata* or bent in three.[1] This injunction seems to have been followed by almost all sculptors. We have already referred to the Kuṣāṇa figures, and in subsequent periods too, bends at neck, hips and knee are discernible, though not so prominent.

Crocodile

In one of the four-handed figures of Balarāma at Mathura, a small crocodile, face turned upward, is to be seen near his left knee (Pl 16). This is the solitary instance from Mathura known to the author. It is very difficult to ascertain if this reptile's appearance is intentional or casual. One explanation is that Balarāma or Śeṣā has sometimes been named *Ekārṇaveśvara* or the Master of the Great Ocean.[2] The term *ekārṇava* has a special meaning in the *purāṇas*. It refers to that stage of destruction when the entire globe disappears under the mountainous waves of the Great Ocean.[3] The crocodile near the feet of Balarāma may therefore symbolise the ocean. The Four Oceans are often seen in anthropomorphic form carrying jars and seated on crocodiles as decorations for door sills in the mediaeval period.[4]

Balarāma's Association with Other Deities

Till now we have been discussing different aspects of the figure of Balarāma. It is now worth-

1. (38).
2. *HVS*, Viṣṇu 26. 54.
3. For *ekārṇava*, *HVS*, Bhaviṣya, Chapters 9 and 10
4. Compare the door sill of a gateway from Kauśāmbī, which originally belonged to a Sūrya temple, Allahabad Museum, No 767.

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while to consider his association with other divinities as seen in sculptures. They are:

Ekānamśā

This goddess is the sister of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. She came to be known as Ekānamśā because she was born of one part (*amśa*) of Viṣṇu himself.[1] The *Mahābhārata*[2] describes how once Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa received her and how attractive she appeared between them. This description fully tallies with her sculptural representations, in which she is always flanked by Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa. Her images are found from the Kuṣāṇa to mediaeval periods We are already aware of her six figures at an early age.[3] Balarāma, as seen with her,[4] has no snake canopy in the Kuṣāṇa period, but in the succeeding ages he is generally seen with it (Pls 27, 28).

1. *HVS*, Viṣṇu, 2, 40-45; 3, 1-28, also called Āryā; 4, 37-42; 120, 6-34.
2. *MBH*, Sabhā, 38 after verse 29 (Gita Press Ed, South Indian version, pp 820-21).
   For the Jaina tradition, *Jaina Harivamśa*, 35, 32, also Chapter 49.
3. MM, U 45 (Pl 15)
   MM, 15, 912
   MM, 67, 529 (Pl 14)
   Ekānamśā seen on Śiva-liṅga from Nānda, Rajasthan.
   Ekānamśā seen on a Kuṣāṇa plaque from Karachi, Pakistan.
   Ekānamśā in the Patna Museum.
   Joshi N P., देवी एकानंशा की कुषाणकालीन मूर्तियाँ, *Bulletin of Museums and Archaeology*, UP, Lucknow, 1 March 1968, pp 23-29.
   Gupta P.L., Ekānamśā and Her Image, *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, LIV, 1968, pp 229-44.
4. Chapter 4, +36, +37, +38, +39, +40, +41.

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With Nāgas

The Mathura Museum has a figure of Balarāma with two Nāgas seated by his side (MM, R 46). Obviously, they are subordinate deities and not mere attendants. According to the *Mahābhārata*, Balarāma is one of the several Nāgas.[1] Here he seems to have been represented with other chieftains of his clan.

With Gaja-Lakṣmī

This is a very rare sculpture, noticed for the first time by Shri R.C. Agrawala in an article.[2] It comes from Rajasthan and appears to belong to the early mediaeval period. It is not easy to explain Balarāma's association with Lakṣmī or Gaja-Lakṣmī, but a clue may be found in the following facts:

(i) One of the names of Ekānamśā is Śrī, also a synonym for Lakṣmī.[3]

(ii) In the *Mahābhārata*, Ekānamśā appears between Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa and has been compared with Lakṣmī between two elephants.[4]

It may thus be argued that in the case of the Rajasthan sculpture Ekānamśā has been represented with her brothers as Gaja-Lakṣmī.

As an Avatāra of Viṣṇu

Some literary sources take Balarāma as an inde-

1. *MBH*, Anuśāsana, 132, 8.
2. Agrawala R.C., Unpublished Temples of Rajasthan, *Arts Asiatiques*, Tome XI, 1965, Fig 26.
3. *HVS*, Viṣṇu, 120, 14.
4. *MBH*, Sabhā, 38 after verse 29, Southern version—
   दहशुस्तां समामध्ये भगिनीं रामकृष्णयो:
   रुक्म पद्मशयां पद्मां श्रीमिवोत्तम नागयो: ॥

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pendent *avatāra* or incarnation of Viṣṇu.[1] The followers of this view believe that Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, got himself incarnated as Saṅkarṣaṇa in his eighth incarnation along with his original form. In that capacity, Balarāma appears in some mediaeval sculptures on the back slab (*pṛṣṭha-śilā*) of Viṣṇu or Śeṣaśayī figures in the line of the ten incarnations (*avatāra-paṭṭikā*). He is generally shown with his snake canopy and weapons, but in exceptional cases the canopy is absent (SML, H 106, Pl 31).

With Neminātha or Yakṣī Ambikā

Balarāma's association with Neminātha has already been discussed. He appears not only with the independent figure of this Tīrthaṅkara or the *Tritirthī* or *Pañchatirthī* figures of other Jinas but also in a few sculptures of Ambikā.[2]

Modern Temples of Balarāma

It has already been pointed out that Balarāma continues to be worshipped in the old form at Mathura and its surrounding regions.[3] Some important centres of his worship are:

(i) Temple of Madan Mohana Dāūjī (*dāū* means elder brother in Vṛja-bhāṣā) at Mathura.
(ii) Temple of Dāūjī, Śergaḍha Wālon kā Mandir, Chhatta Bazar, Mathura.

1. *Agni*, 49, 1-9; *Bhāgavata* I, 3, 6-22; *Vṛddha Hārita Smṛti*, 7, 142-3.
2. Joshi N.P., *Mathura Sculptures*, Mathura 1966, Pl 98.
3. Temples of Balarāma are often found at different places of *Vṛja-Yātrā*.
Mital Prabhu Dayal, ब्रज का सांस्कृतिक इतिहास, Mathura 1966, pp 102 110, 123, 126, 128, 154, etc.

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(iii) Temple of Dāūjī near Chauk, Mathura.
(iv) Dāūjī in Chhaṭhī Pālanā or Chaurāsī Khambhā Temple at Mahavana.
(v) Temple of Dāūjī at Baladeva.
(vi) Temple of Dāūjī at Vrindavana.
(vii) Balarāma on Saṅkarṣaṇa Kuṇḍa.
(viii) Dāūjī in Madhubana.
(ix) Balarāma on Govinda Kuṇḍa.
(x) Dāūjī in Nandagaon.
(xi) Dāūjī at Kosi.
(xii) Dāūjī at Chīraghāṭa.
(xiii) Temple of Baladeva at Beri near Parkham.
(xiv) Temple of Balarāma in Tālavana.

As a Deity of Agriculturists

Balarāma generally carries a plough and pestle. These are basically not weapons but agricultural implements, and therefore their appearance in the iconography of Balarāma may be regarded as an indication of his association with agriculture. Apart from this, his possession of immense physical powers and very close relations with earth and water in the form of a serpent deity serve as additional characteristics befitting a deity of agriculture.

Let us examine the available literary data in this connection. Writing in the Mauryan period, Kauṭilya prescribes in his *Arthaśāstra* that in sowing the first handful of corn *namaskāra* should be offered to Prajāpati Kaśyapa, Deva (clouds) and the goddess Sītā.[1] Worship of Sītā is known as *Sītā-yajñya*, and the *Harivamśa* lays down that a *Brāhmaṇa* should perform *mantra-yajñya*, a milkman (*gopa*) should have

1. *Arthaśāstra*, 2, 24, 37, Gaṇapati Śāstri Ed I, p 289.

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giri-yajñya and a cultivator *Sītā-yajñya*.[1]

The word *sītā* calls for special attention, because according to *Amarakoṣa*, a work of the Gupta period, this is a furrow caused by a plough.[2] *Nānārthdhvani Mañjarī* uses the word with reference to the Goddess of Corn (*Sītā Śasyādhidevatā*).[3] The *Śabda Kalpadruma* cites a verse to be chanted in worshipping the plough in which this implement has been addressed as producer of *sītā*.[4]

Another work, *Rājanirghaṇṭa*,[5] tells us that *sītā* and *madirā* are synonyms. This piece of information is extremely interesting when read with reference to the *Arthaśāstra*,[6] according to which the king should have houses *gṛha*, temples) of Śiva, Vaiśravaṇa, Aśvi (Aśvinī-Kumāras), Śrī and Madirā in the heart of his city (*pura-madhye*).

One may easily see that all these deities are associated with general prosperity, Śiva with welfare, Vaiśravaṇa or Kubera with wealth, Aśvinī Kumāras, the physicians of the gods, with maintenance of health, Śrī with prosperity, and finally Madirā or Sītā with agriculture.

It is true that these early works, *Arthaśāstra* and *Harivamśa*, do not associate Balarāma with agriculture, but both Madirā and Sītā are very closely

1. *HVS*, Poona Ed, 59, 27, p 387.
2. *Amarakoṣa*, II, 14 सीता लांगल-पद्धति ।
3. *Śabda Kalpadruma*, see the words *sītā* and *madirā*.
4. *Ibid*,

   जीवयस्यखिलं विश्वं चालयन् वसुधातलम्
   प्रादुर्भवियसे सीतां सीर तुभ्यं नमोस्तुवै ॥ ——हलपूजनमन्त्र

5. *Ibid*, see *madirā*.
6. *Arthaśāstra*, 2, 4, 24.

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related to him. According to Jaina sources[1]—compiled about AD 783—Sītā was a wife of Balarāma and the association of *madirā*, in the sense of wine, with him is well known.

The *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* refers directly to Balarāma as related to agriculture. This work lays down that Balabhadra should be worshipped by those who desire to possess power (*balakāmam*) and obtain success in agriculture (*kṛṣi karma prasiddhaye*).[2] His worship has been prescribed in the form of *halāyudha* at the start of cultivation.[3] This shows that in about the 6th century AD Balarāma's association with agriculture had already been established. Later, Parāśara—another important writer on Indian agriculture—talks of *sītā-yajñya* and *khala-yajñya* and lists the different deities[4] to be worshipped on special occasions, but he does not name Balarāma.

Parāśara has written another work on agriculture named *Kṛṣi Saṅgraha*.[5] He lays down in it that at the start of ploughing (*hala-prasaraṇam*) a farmer should remember Vāsava (Indra), Vyāsa, Pṛthu, Rāma and Parāśara.[6] Rāma should refer here to Balarāma

1. *Jaina Harivamśa*, 44, 41—
   चतस्रस्तत्सुता: कन्या रेवती वन्धुमत्यपि
   सीता राजीवनेत्रा च ता: दत्ता सीरिणे पुरा ॥
2. *VDH*, 118, 12-13.
3. *VDH*, 123, 12.
4. *Bṛhat-Parāśara Smṛti*, 5, 167-85.
   Smṛti Sandarbha, III, pp 751-53.
5. *Kṛṣi Saṅgraha* by Parāśara, Vangavasi Press, Calcutta, 1922.
6. *Ibid*, p 28, verse 128—
   स्मर्तव्यो वसावो व्यास: पृथुराम: पराशर:
   संपूज्याग्नि द्विज देव कुर्याद्धाल प्रसारणम् ॥

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as Vāsava, Pṛthu and Balarāma have all been closely associated with fertility of fields (*pṛthvī*). Thus it is evident that in later periods also Balarāma was worshipped as a deity associated with agriculture.

Balarāma and Wrestlers

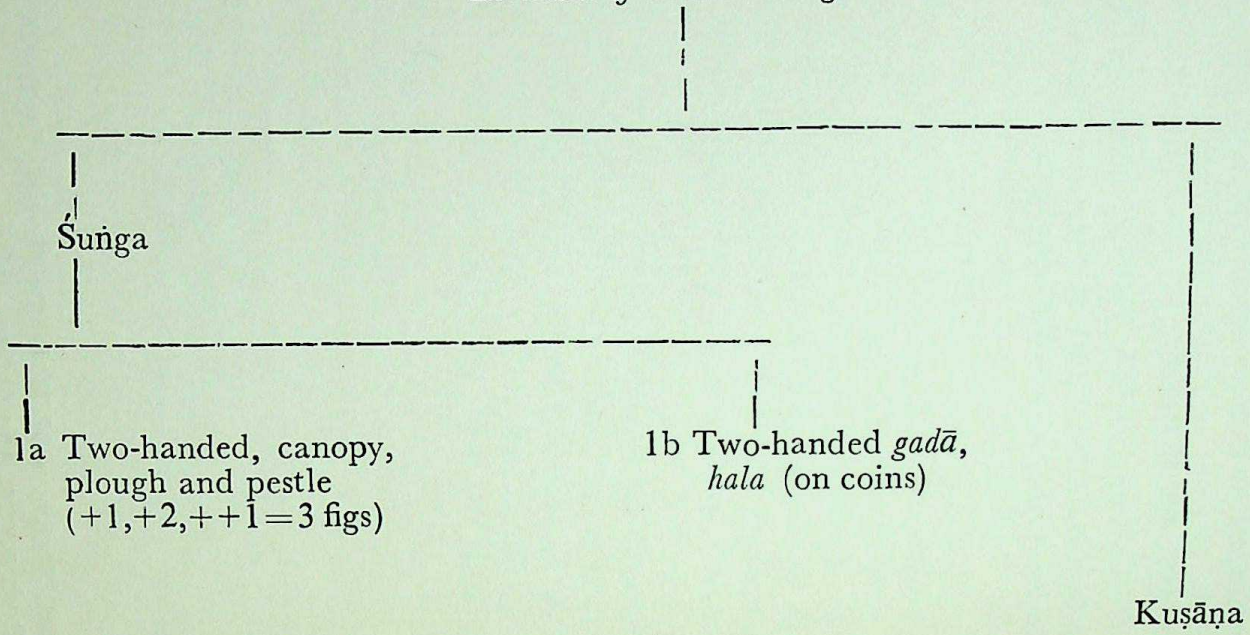
According to *Malla Purāṇa*, wrestlers should remember Balarāma and the serpent Vāsukī and put three knots on their crests (*śikhā*).[1]

1. *Malla Purāṇa*, 6, 37-38, Ed Dr Bhogilal Sandesara, ज्येष्ठी मल्ल ज्ञाती अने मल्लपुराण, Ahmedabad, 1948.

CHART I

(Circa 2nd Cent BC-3rd Cent AD)

*Evolution of Balarāma Figure**



* The numerals marked + or ++ refer to the Balarāma figures described in Chapter IV.

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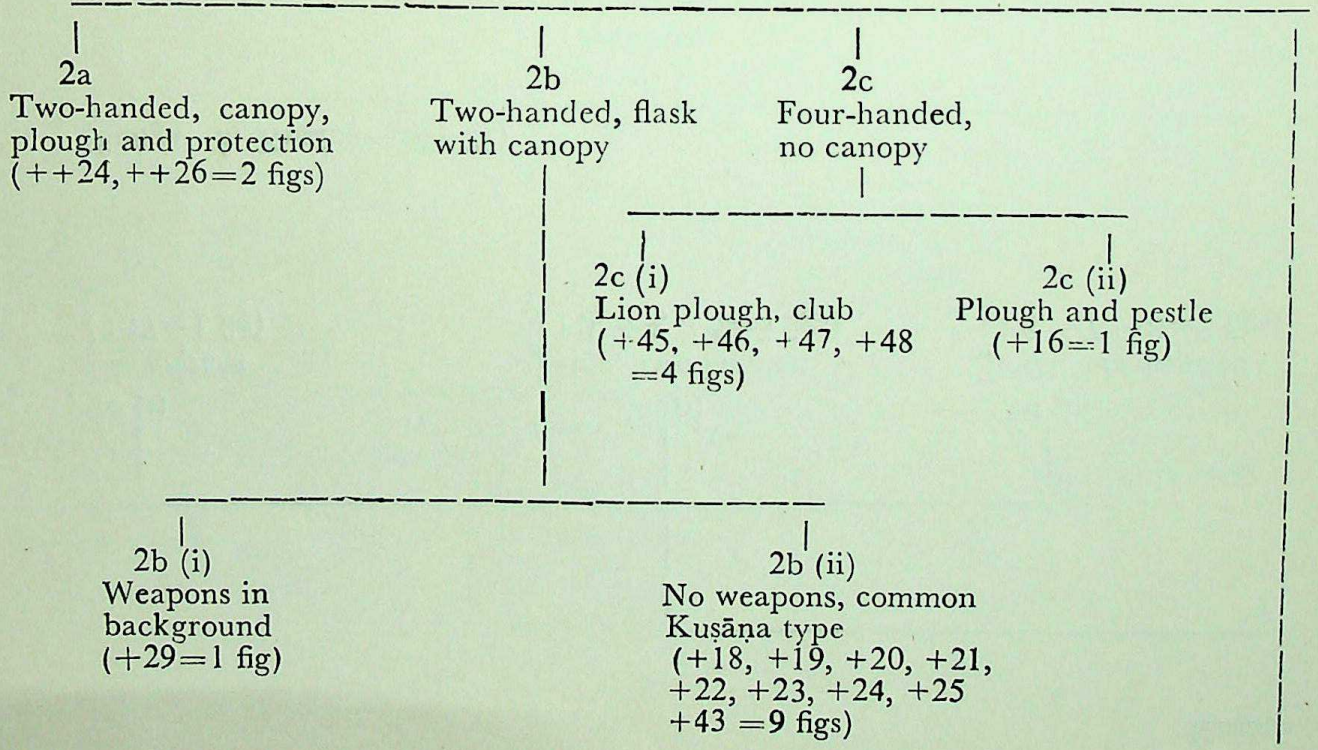

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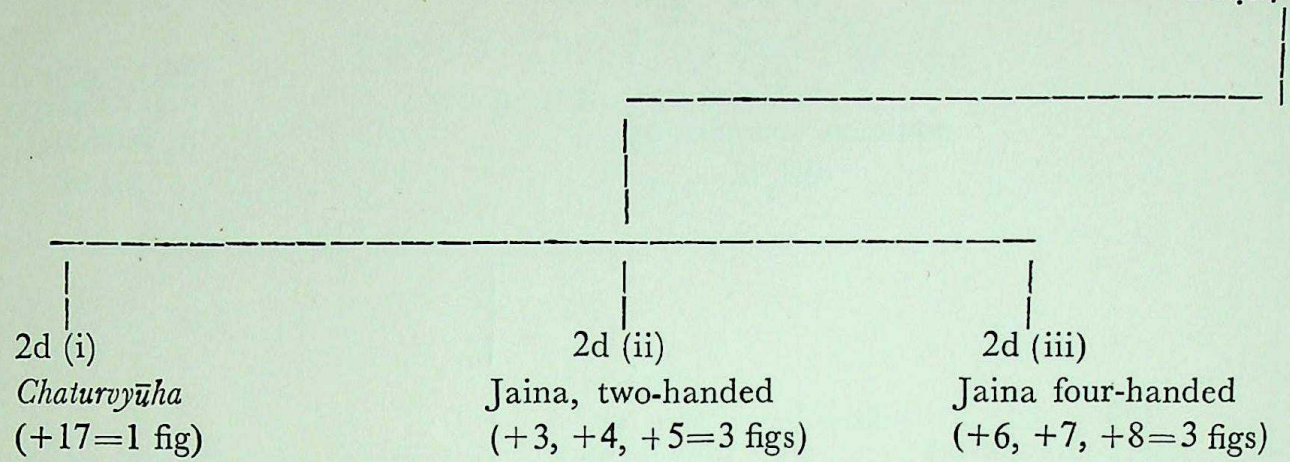

(Śuṅga—3, Kuṣāṇa—24=27)

CC-0. Agamnigam Digital Preservation Foundation,New Delhi. Iconography of Balarāma

CHART II

(Circa 4th-6th Cent AD)

Balarāma

3a
Two-handed,
flask, canopy
(+26, +27, +28, ++2
=4 figs)

3b
Four-handed, club, plough,
flask, right hand over head,
canopy
(+9, +10=2 figs)

3c
Four-handed,
canopy, pestle
and plough
(+30, ++3=2 figs)

3d
Special forms
Ananta
(+53, +s)54, +55
=3 fig

(Gupta—11 figs)

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CHART III

(Circa 7th Cent AD-late mediaeval period)

Balarāma

4a
Two-handed, canopy of one, two or more hoods (+34, +35, +39, +40, +41, +42, +44, ++15, ++16, ++20, ++21=11 figs)

4b
Two-handed without canopy (+37, ++8=2 figs)

4c

4d
Special forms
(i) with Revati ++6, ++10, ++17, +52
(ii) with female attendant ++12, ++13, ++4
(iii) with wine flask holder +5
(iv) with Garuḍa ++7
(v) with Gaja-Lakṣmī ++9
(vi) with Kṛṣṇa ++18
(vii) Saṅkarṣaṇa Viṣṇu ++29
=12 figs

4e

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4c
Four-armed, club,
plough, flask, right
or left hand suspended
(+11, +12, +13, +14, +15, +31,
32, +33, +49, +50, +51, +38,
++22, ++23, ++25, ++27, ++28
=17 figs)

4e
Unclassified
(+36, +56,
++11, ++14, ++19
=5 figs)

(Mediaeval and Modern—47)

3+24+11+47=85 figs catalogued

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4

PART I

Important Figures of Balarāma in Uttar Pradesh

The first part of this chapter takes brief note of important Balarāma images in Uttar Pradesh, not necessarily found in that state but located within its borders at present. The second part lists Balarāma figures outside UP but iconographically important. The listing in the first part has been arranged as follows:

(i) General classification heading.
(ii) Serial number of the catalogue marked with plus (+) sign.
(iii) Location giving abridged name of museum and accession number.
(iv) Date of sculpture.
(v) Description mainly of the Balarāma figure. The attributes have been mentioned clockwise.
(vi) Provenance and size, if known.
(vii) Special remarks, if any.
(viii) Reference of publication, etc.

(i) *Early Figures*

+1 SML, G 215 (Pls 7, 8) circa 2nd Century BC

Balarāma standing, two-handed, club in right hand and long plough in left, single earring, fluffy

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turban, dhoti worn in Bharhut style, upper garment thrown over the shoulder, right knee slightly bent, canopy of seven-hooded snake with only five hoods now visible. Reverse shows a snake with horizontal coils.

Found at Janasutī, six miles from Mathura on road to Govardhan in 1929. (Ht 2′ 2½″)
Agrawala V.S., *JISOA*, V, 1937, p 125; Joshi N.P., *Catalogue of Brahmanical Sculptures*, Fig 13.

+2 Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi 279, (Pl 9) circa 2nd Century BC

Upper portion of Balarāma figure, turban and snake canopy over head, miniature figure of a lion on the top of a weapon, perhaps plough. Found at Ādikeśava Ghāṭa, Varanasi.

(ii) *Jaina Balabhadra, two-armed*

+3 MM, 34, 2488 (Pl 10) circa 2-3rd Century AD

Seated Neminātha attended by Balabhadra and Vāsudeva, the first-named standing in *namaskāra-mudrā*, five-hooded snake canopy over head. Mathura. (Ht 10½″)

+4 SML, J 60, circa 2-3rd Century AD

Neminātha seated as above flanked by Balabhadra and Vāsudeva. Balabhadra in *namaskāramudrā* had a snake canopy, now badly mutilated.
Mathura.

+5 SML, J 117 (Pl 11) circa 2-3rd Century AD

Seated Neminātha under a *kaivalya vṛkṣa* flanked by Balabhadra and Vāsudeva, who stands in *namas-kāramudrā* with six-hooded canopy over his head.

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Mathura. (Ht 2′)
Smith V.A., *Jaina Stupa*, Pl XCI.

(iii) *Jaina Baladeva, four-armed*

+6 SML, J 47, circa 1st Century AD

Seated Neminātha with Balabhadra and Vāsudeva at his side. Figures badly mutilated. Only right hand of Balarāma turned inwards, part of his club and four-armed Vāsudeva with *jalapātra* and *vanamālā* are preserved. The figure has traces of an inscription on the pedestal.
Mathura.
Srivastava V.N., Some Interesting Jaina Sculptures, *BMA*, Vol IX, June 1972, pp 45-52, Figs 5, 5a, 5b.

+7 SML, Surplus 758 (Pl 12) circa 2-3rd Century AD

Left side of a Jina image showing upper part of Balarāma figure. His extra right hand holds *gadā*, corresponding left rests on lion plough, has single earring in left ear and headgear decorated with triple crests. No snake canopy.
Mathura.

+8 MM, 34, 2502, circa 3-4th Century AD

Upper part of Neminātha figure flanked by Balarāma and Vāsudeva. Balarāma's lower right arm is akimbo, upper right holds mace, upper left plough and normal left has a wine cup. Seven-hooded snake canopy over head.
Mathura. (Ht $6\frac{3}{4}$″)

+9 SML, J 121 (Pl 24) circa 4-5th Century AD

Standing Neminātha flanked by Balabhadra and

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Vāsudeva. Lotus halo behind Jina's head and garland bearers hovering in the sky. Balabhadra has a snake canopy, only four hoods of which are visible. Normal right in *abhayamudrā*, extra right holds *gadā*, extra left stafflike *hala*, and normal left wine cup.
Mathura. (Ht 1′ 11″)

+10 SML, J 89 (Pl 25) circa 5th Century AD

Fragment of Neminātha figure showing Balabhadra, partly preserved halo of main figure. Balarāma's right hand with open palm raised above head, extra right has a mace, extra left lion plough, normal left an indistinct object.
Mathura. (Ht 10″)

+12 SML, J 776, Sam 1063 (1006 AD)

Black stone image of seated Jina Suvrata over his *chhatrāvali* and *deva-dundubhi* appears seated Neminātha in a niche flanked by Balabhadra and Vāsudeva. The former carries *vara*, *mūsala*, *hala* and *śaṅkha* with end turned up (*udagra*). He has a three-hooded snake canopy. The sculpture bears an inscription.
Agra.

+13 SML, J 78, circa 11-12th Century AD

Neminātha seated among several deities, including Balabhadra and Vāsudeva. ¿Balabhadra holds a cup, ›thick mace, and a small plough clockwise. Normal left arm akimbo. Long *vanamālā* reaching below knees and snake canopy over his head.
Mathura.
Smith V.A., *Jaina Stupa*, Pl XCVIII.

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+14 SML, 66, 53 (S 24) circa 11-12th Century AD

Neminātha standing, Balabhadra near his right shoulder with three-hooded snake canopy. His extra right hand carries pestle, extra left plough and normal left touches hip. Balarāma stands in *tribhaṅga* pose. On the corresponding side appears a four-handed Vāsudeva.
(Ht 4′ 4″)

+15 MM, D 7, circa 11-12th Century AD

Ambikā, Yakṣī of Neminātha, seated on lion. Over her head is seen Neminātha flanked by Balabhadra and Vāsudeva, each standing on a lotus flower.
(Ht 1′ 9″)
Joshi, N.P., *Mathura Sculptures*, Pl 98; Agrawala V.S., *Jain Antiquary*, March 1938, pp 89-92.

(iv) *Brahmanical Balarāma without Canopy, Independent Figures*

+16 MM, 17, 1325 (Pls 16, 17) circa 2nd Century AD

Torso of four-armed Balarāma carved in round. Normal right hand in *abhayamudrā*, left hand near girdle holding hem of garment (*vastrānta*). Pestle and plough are on right and left respectively, and the extra arms probably supported them. A collar-like garland encircles the neck, and a crocodile with mouth upturned near the left foot.
Mathura. (Ht 2′)

(v) *Chaturvyūha-mūrti*

+17 MM, 14, 392-95 (Pl 19) circa 2-3rd Century AD

Upper portion of Viṣṇu figure in four pieces, all

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of which have now been joined together. Out of Viṣṇu's weapons only the *gadā* is visible. From his right shoulder springs a two-handed Balarāma with snake canopy and wine cup. His figure agrees fully with the then current Kuṣāṇa iconography of him. Above the head of Viṣṇu is a figure of Aniruddha. For a detailed discussion of this image, see pages 26 and 27.
Mathura. (Ht 1′ 5″)

(vi) *Two-handed snake-canopied figures without weapons*

+18 MM, C 15 (Pl 20) circa 1st-3rd Century AD

Figure of Balarāma surmounted by a seven-hooded snake canopy, the coils of which are visible on both sides. The right hand of the figure is raised above the head, the left holds a wine cup. The deity has headgear with triple crests and one *sinha-kuṇḍala*, *vanamālā* on his shoulders.
Kukargaon, Mathura. (Ht 2′ 10″)

+19 MM, 14, 406 (Pl 21) circa 1st-3rd Century AD

A fragment consisting of head, right hand and snake canopy of a Balarāma image much similar to C 15 (+18). Auspicious symbols such as *chakra*, *mīna-yagala*, *śrivatsa*, *nandyāvarta*, *svastika*, *pūrṇaghaṭa* and *śaṅkha* adorn the snake hoods.
Mathura. (Ht 1′ 2″)

+20 MM, 52, 3636 (Figs 2-3) circa 1-3rd Century AD

Terracotta figure of two-handed Balarāma in usual Kuṣāṇa style. This figure is specially noteworthy because this is the only so far known Bala-

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rāma figure of the Kuṣāṇa period modelled after the contemporary sculptures carved in the round.
Sarai Azampur, Mathura. (Ht 3¼″)

+21 SML, 57, 457 (Pl 22) circa 1-3rd Century AD

Fragment of a Balarāma figure in Kuṣāṇa style. Among the auspicious symbols which once decorated the snake hoods, one resembling a five-petalled crescent is interesting.
Mathura. (Ht 1′ 5½″)

+22 MM, 17, 1300, circa 1-3rd Century AD

Head of a Balarāma figure with one *kuṇḍala*, triple-crest headgear and snake canopy.
Mathura. (Ht 9″)

+23 MM, U 84, circa 1-3rd Century AD

Upper portion of Balarāma figure with seven-hooded snake canopy in Kuṣāṇa style.
Mathura (Ht 11½″)

+24 MM, 17, 1314, circa 3rd Century AD

Torso of Balarāma figure holding a cup.
Girdharpur Tila, Mathura. (Ht 2′ 4″)

+25 MM, SN 150 (Pl 23) circa 3rd Century AD

Torso of Balarāma figure in round holding a cup of wine in left hand. Snake coils depicted on back slab.
Mathura. (Ht 2′ 2″)

+26 MM, 17, 1334 (Figs 4, 5) circa 4-5th Century AD

Standing figure of Balarāma carved in round, much damaged. His single earring, short *vanamālā*

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and *uttarīya* tied with a knot. The sculpture agrees with the Pawaya figure from Gwalior.
Girdharpur Tila, Mathura. (Ht 2′ 4″)

+27 MM, 14-15, 435, circa 5th Century AD

Torso of standing Balarāma figure holding a flask of wine in left hand. *Vanamālā* on shoulders and snake coils visible in background.
Ram Kothi well, Mathura. (Ht 2′ 6″)

(vii) *Two-handed, snake-canopied figures with weapons*

+29 MM, C 19 (Pl 18) circa 2-3rd Century AD

Balarāma standing under a snake canopy with right hand raised and left carrying a cuplike object. In the background are pestle on right and plough on left of deity.
Dirgha Viṣṇu Temple, Mathura. (Ht 1′ 10″)

(viii) *Four-handed, snake-canopied figures with weapons*

+30 MM, 18, 1399 (Pl 26) circa 4-5th Century AD

Four-handed image of Balarāma, fairly well preserved, showing pestle suspended in upper left hand. No corresponding arm with plough. Normal hands of the deity in Kuṣāṇa style. Long *vanamālā* on shoulders.
Bajna, Mathura. (Ht 1′ 3″)

+31 MM, 15, 1116, circa 9-10th Century AD

Four-handed Balarāma, holding cup, pestle and plough. Natural left hand on thigh. Waterworn snake canopy and miniature attendants in position of *āyudha-puruṣas* are also seen.
Mathura. (Ht 5″)

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+32 MM, R 46, circa 10-11th Century AD

Four-handed figure of Balarāma standing slightly turned to left. He carries a stafflike pestle and plough and cup. No headgear is seen. On each side a seated *Nāga* figure appears near his feet. The back of the stone was intended to be used for subsequent carvings but this was not completed.
(Ht 1′ 6¾″)

+33 MM, U 99, circa 11-12th Century AD

Four-handed figure of Balarāma with cup, plough and pestle clockwise. His left hand rests on the head of a devotee. Fairly waterworn.
Ganesra, Mathura. (Ht 8¼″)

+34 MM, 32, 2125, Post-Mughal period

Balarāma standing with right hand raised and carrying a goblet. *Mūsala* shown on his right side, and he wears usual ornaments. This is a modern image based on an old model.
Mathura. (Ht 3′ 6″)

+35 D 36 (Pl 35) modern period

Marble statuette of Balarāma modelled after the old Kuṣāṇa style which continued to enjoy popularity.
Brindavana, Mathura. (Ht 1′ 6¾″)

(ix) *Incarnation of Viṣṇu*

+36 MM, 16, 1212, mediaeval period

Balarāma shown along with Kalki, Buddha, Rāma and Paraśurāma.
Mathura. (Ht 1′ 7″)

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+37 SML, H 106 (Pl 31) circa 10th Century AD

Figure of Viṣṇu showing Balarāma as an incarnation along with other *avatāras* and with usual weapons but no snake canopy.
Pāla school. Gorakhpur. (Ht 3′ 11″)

+38 SML, 42, 189 (Pl 29) circa 10th Century AD

Standing Viṣṇu with Balarāma in *avatāra-paṭṭikā*. The figure is four-handed, right hand with open palm over head, left with wine cup. Extra hands suspended downward and hold *gadā* and *hala*. Five-hooded snake canopy of which only four are preserved. The plough is badly worn out.
Kalkankar, Pratapgarh. (Ht 2′ 11″)

The figure of Balarāma is specially interesting as on one hand it preserves the old Kuṣāṇa traditions while on the other it has copied a good deal from Gupta artists.

+39 SML, 65, 180, circa 10th Century AD

Balarāma as an incarnation seated on a Viṣṇu image. He has only two hands and holds a plough in left and cup in right. A three-hooded snake canopy adorns his head.
(Ht 3′ 2″)

+40 Allahabad Museum 410, circa 12th Century AD

Standing Viṣṇu with a broken figure of two-handed Balarāma as *avatāra*. He has a cup in right hand, and the left is suspended. No headgear, but *ekāvali*, *vanamālā* and sacred thread are visible. There was a three-hooded snake canopy of which only the central hood is preserved.

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Meja, Allahabad. (Ht of Balarāma $5\frac{1}{2}''$)

+41 Allahabad Museum 452, circa 12th Century AD

Standing Viṣṇu with Balarāma as an *avatāra*. The latter is seen with a plough in his raised right hand, rest as above.
Allahabad.

+42 Maṅgalāgaurī Temple, Varanasi, circa 12th Century AD

Balarāma as an *avatāra* depicted on a Viṣṇu image under worship. He is seated in *lalitāsana* with plough in left hand and pestle in right, and has a three-hooded snake canopy.

(x) *Other Balarāma Figures*

+43 Allahabad Museum 858, circa 2-3rd Century AD

Head of a Balarāma figure with snake canopy of which five hoods are visible. Open right palm over his head and headgear with triple crests indicate that the sculpture was carved in contemporary Mathura style.
Jhansi, Allahabad. (Ht 15″)
Pramod Chandra, *Stone Sculptures in the Allahabad Museum*, Fig 84, p 61.

+44 Rājamandir, Sītalā Devī Temple, Varanasi (Pl 32) circa 8-9th Century AD

Standing Balarāma carrying a cup of wine in right hand, left suspended so as to touch thigh. Snake canopy partly preserved, one miniature human figure stands at each side.

This sculpture was seen and photographed by the author in 1963.

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(xi) *Balarāma with Ekānamśā and Revatī*

+45 MM, 67, 529 (Pl 14) circa 1-2nd Century AD

A waterworn stone slab shows three figures, two four-handed males at side and a normal female in centre. Male figure to the left has *gadā* and *chakra* in upper hands. Normal right hand is raised in *abhayamudrā* while the left rests on hip. The figure is obviously that of Viṣṇu. The figure on the corresponding side is Balarāma holding *gadā* and lion-headed *hala* in upper hands while lower hands are in pose similar to Viṣṇu's. The figure between them is that of Ekānamśā standing with her right hand in *abhayamudrā*. Lower portion of sculpture is entirely worn out.

The panel undoubtedly depicts goddess *Ekānamśā* standing between Balarāma and Vāsudeva or Kṛṣṇa. Though the piece is poorly preserved, it is very interesting as it definitely establishes the existence of Ekānamśā figures in the Kuṣāṇa period. Its importance is increased as it helps identify correctly a few contemporary pieces in Mathura Museum.
Mathura. (Ht 7¼″)
Joshi N.P., Ekānamśā in Early Kuṣāṇa Art, *Journal of Indian Society of Oriental Art* (NS) II, pp 34-36.

+46 MM, U 45 (Pl 15) circa 1-2nd Century AD

Right end of a fragmentary stone slab which originally must have been similar to that just described (+45). It shows Balarāma and Ekānamśā standing side by side. Single earring in left ear and headgear with triple crests are identification marks of Balarāma. What looks like the tail of the lion

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crowning the weapon in his left hand is actually the blade of a plough as seen in MM 39, 2856 (+47). (Ht 7½″)

+47 MM, 39, 2856 (Pl 13) circa 1-2nd Century AD

Fragment of a slab showing Balarāma standing to right. His *gadā*, headgear with triple crests and single earring in left ear are identification marks. In upper right hand he holds *hala* crowned with lion figure. It is quite possible that in its original form the slab might have depicted Ekānamśā and Vāsudeva as well, but there is no clue left now. The sculpture has been identified as four-armed Viṣṇu in the museum records.
Mathura. (Ht 6¼″)

+48 MM, 15, 912, circa 1-2nd Century AD

Left end fragment of similar slab showing worn-out Ekānamśā and four-handed Viṣṇu.
Palikhera, Mathura. (Ht 7″)

+49 Panel on the Lakṣmī Kuṇḍa stone *śikhara* at Varanasi, circa 7-9th Century AD

On a miniature stone *śikhara* carved on all sides, Balarāma, Ekānamśā and Kṛṣṇa appear as a group on one panel. Balarāma has four hands, his usual weapons and a snake canopy, but the important feature is that unlike other specimens here Kṛṣṇa or Vāsudeva has been depicted with only two hands. The sculpture was noticed by the author before 1958. (Ht 11″)

Joshi N.P., *Prāchīna Bhāratīya Mūrti-vijñyāna,* Patna 1977, Line sketch 79.

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+50 SML, C 58 (Pl 28) circa 9th Century AD

A fine sculpture showing Balarāma and his sister and brother standing in a row. Balarāma has a *hala* in his right hand with blade resting on the ground. The corresponding weapon is a *gadā* similarly placed. In his normal hands he has a *pānapātra* and *śaṅkha*. The figure is very well carved and beautifully preserved. The goddess Ekānamśā is two-handed and has a lotus in one hand, while Vāsudeva has four hands with his usual weapons. Etah. (Ht 2′)

Ghosh J.C., *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal*, New Series, II (i), 1936, pp 41-46, Pl 7.

+51 MM, U 98 (Pl 33) circa 11-12th Century AD

Right end of a stone slab showing four-handed Balarāma standing under a canopy of serpent hoods holding *hala* and *mūsala* in upper hands. Lower right hand, probably holding a cup, is on his chest, while the left is akimbo. Near his feet are female attendants. Next to Balarāma and of equal height is Ekānamśā, but only the right hand, holding a lotus, is visible.

Ganesra, Mathura.

+52 Balarāma with Revatī on a panel from Kardameśvara Temple, Varanasi, circa 11th Century AD

On the north side of Kardameśvara Temple in Kandua village, first halt of the Pañchakrośī *yātrā*, a well-preserved panel of the Gahadwal period depicts Balarāma with his wife Revatī. He holds a *hala* and a *pānapātra* in his right hands and *mūsala* in one of his left hands. He has his usual snake canopy.

Agrawala V.S., Kardameśvara Śiva Temple, *Journal of the UP Historical Society*, Lucknow, XXII, p 212, No 10.

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(xii) *Figures of Ananta*

+53 Allahabad Museum No 292, circa 6th Century AD

Chaturmukha-mūrti of *Sarvatobhadra* type showing Varāha, Vāmana, Hari-Hara and Saṅkarṣaṇa in Ananta form. Of them, the last is important for our purpose. The face, which had fine curly hair, is mutilated. The lower right hand of the deity rests on the head of a female figure, which is perhaps a *gadā* personified. The upper right hand is broken. Upper left carries a *śaṅkha*, while the lower left has been placed on the head of a dwarfish figure carrying a bowl in its right hand. The deity has an *ekāvali* and *yajñopavīta*. In the background are snake coils from shoulders to feet, and there was positively a snake canopy over the figure. Absence of a plough and *vanamālā* and the appearance of two *āyudhas* personified, specially the person carrying a *pānapātra*, is very interesting. The figure partly agrees with the description of *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* (III, 85, 49 शेषोपभोगोपविष्टस्य शून्यं करचतुष्टयम्). It is not seated on the coils and only the two normal hands have no attributes.

Kutari, Allahabad. (Ht 20¾″)

Pramod Chandra, *Stone Sculptures in the Allahabad Museum*, 1971, Fig 203d.

+54 Ananta on Daśāvatāra Temple, Deogarh, circa 5-6th Century AD

Vats M.S., The Gupta Temple at Deogarh, *ASI*, Memoir No 70, p 20, Pl 5.

+55 Terracotta plaque showing Ananta, Bhitargaon Temple, 6th Century AD

The figure is only two-handed.

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Singh R.C., Bhitargaon Brick Temple, *BMA*, No 2, 1968, Fig 18.

(xiii) *Episodes from Balarāma's Life*

+56 Bharat Kala Bhavan 20088, circa 8th Century AD

Two-handed standing Balarāma is seen killing with his plough a male figure seated on a throne. Behind the throne appears a female figure in *namaskāramudrā*. The museum authorities tend to identify the scene depicted as Balarāma killing the monkey chief Dvivida. Shri R.C. Agrawal says it shows Baladeva killing *Lomaharṣaṇa*.

Dholpur, Rajasthan.

Agrawal R.C., Brahmanical Sculptures from Bharat Kala Bhavan, *Chhavi* Golden Jubilee Volume, 1971, p 174, Fig 339.

PART II

Some Important Figures of Balarāma outside Uttar Pradesh

As indicated in the opening paragraph of this chapter, a short account is given below of those figures of Balarāma, which are now outside the state, though they either originated from UP or have been connected with its neighbouring regions. Of course only those sculptures have been included here which are either artistically or iconographically important and deserve special mention for comparative study. Their exact reference of publication follows the description.

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++1 Two-handed Balarāma from Tumain in former Gwalior State, circa 1st Century BC *Archaeological Survey of India Annual Reports*, 1918-19, Pl XIIIa; Joshi N.P., प्राचीन भारतीय मूर्तिविज्ञान, Patna, Pl 70.

++2 Two-handed Balarāma, circa 4-5th Century AD. Dvivedi Harihara Niwas, ग्वालियर राज्य में प्राचीन मूर्तिकला, Gwalior, Figs 27-28.

++3 Four-handed Balarāma hailing from Mathura akin to our +30, circa 4-5th Century AD. Härtel Herbert, *Indische Skulpturen*, Berlin 1960, Pls 21 to 24, pp 62-3.

++4 Balarāma with two female attendants carrying bottles of wine. Early mediaeval.
Thakore S.R., *Catalogue of Sculptures in the Archaeological Museum, Gwalior*, Lashkar, p 16, No 10.

++5 Balarāma from Osian with four hands, the normal left round neck of wine flask holder, 8th century AD.
Agrawal R.C., some Unpublished Sculptures of Baladeva from Rajasthan, *Journal of Indian History*, Vol XXXIX, Pt 1, April 1961, Pl II, Fig 1.

++6 Four-armed Baladeva standing and embracing his spouse Revatī from Osian. He touches her breast with normal left hand while the normal right is on the head of a female attendant. In his extra hands he holds a plough and wheel. Appearance of wheel is not very common. Circa 8th Century AD.
Agrawal R.C., Ibid, Pl II, Fig 2; Sharma, B.N., *Roopa-Lekha*, XL, 1 & 2, p 97, Pl III.

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++7 Four-armed Balarāma seated on Garuḍa from Osian. This is again very uncommon. The deity holds a *hala* and *mūsala* in his extra hands and *śaṅkha* in one of his normal hands. The other hand is in *jñānamudrā*, which is also very unusual. Circa 8th Century AD.
Agrawal R.C., Ibid, p 126; Banerjea J.N., *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art*, XIV, 1946, pp 26-7.

++8 Balarāma from Abaneri in Jaipur region. This is a two-handed figure holding *hala* in left hand and cup in right. A female attendant is seen with a jar below plough. The snake canopy is absent. Circa 8th Century AD.
Agrawal R.C., Ibid, Pl I.

++9 Baladeva with Gaja-Lakṣmī, from Amjhara, circa 8th century AD.
Agrawal R.C., Unpublished Temples of Rajasthan, *Arts Asiatiques*, Tome XI, Fas 2, 1965, p 73, Fig 26.

++10 Balarāma and Revatī, hailing from Katara in Bharatpur and now in the Rajputana Museum at Ajmer, circa 8th Century AD.
Agrawal R.C., Some Unpublished Sculptures of Baladeva from Rajasthan, *Journal of Indian History*, XXXIX, April 1961, Pl II, Fig 2.

++11 Balarāma in the *avatārapaṭṭikā* of Viṣṇu on Śeṣa, from Badoli, in the Kota Museum, circa 9th Century AD.
Shastri Madan Mohan, कोटा संग्रहालय की विष्णु प्रतिमाएँ, *The Researcher*, Bulletin of Rajasthan's

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Archaeology and Museums, Vol V-VI, 1964-65, Pl XXII, pp 95-6.

++12 Balarāma with two female attendants, mediaeval.
Thakore S.R., *Catalogue of Sculptures in the Archaeological Museum Gwalior*, Lashkar, p 5, No 9.

++13 Similar, mediaeval.
Ibid, p 25, No 10.

++14 Four-handed Balarāma seen on the *pradakshiṇāpatha* of Lakshmana Temple at Khajuraho, circa 11th Century AD.

++15 A very fine image of Balarāma with four hands in *lalitāsana* on the *śikhara* of the same temple, circa 11th Century AD.

++16 Two-handed Balarāma, canopied by a seven-hooded snake, killing Sūta Lomaharṣaṇa, circa 11th Century AD.

++17 Balarāma and Revatī standing in *tribhaṅga* pose, circa 11th Century AD.

++18 Balarāma seen with Kṛṣṇa in the *Kubjānugraha mūrti*, circa 11th Century AD.

++19 Balarāma in an *avatārapaṭṭikā*.
For all the above five images of Balarāma Avasthi, Ramashraya, खजुराहो की प्रतिमाएं.

++20 Viṣṇu with Balarāma in *avatārapaṭṭikā* from Khajuraho, now in Allahabad Museum, No 377, circa 11th Century AD. Balarāma is seen near the feet of Viṣṇu corresponding to Rāma. He has two hands, with cup in right and plough with blade resting on the ground in left. His hair is tied in a knot. The canopy

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of a snake with one hood is noteworthy. On the corresponding side of the plough is a free standing object which looks like a *gadā*. (Ht 11″)

++21 As above, Allahabad Museum No 265, circa 11th Century AD. Viṣṇu is seen here seated on Garuḍa. Balarāma appears as an incarnation carrying a *pānapātra* in his right hand and a stafflike object in the left. He has a one-hooded snake canopy, a necklace and a sacred thread of pearls. His lower portion is concealed by a seated image of Paraśurāma. Khajuraho. (Ht 8″)

++22 Ananta, Chāṅgu Nārāyaṇa Temple, Nepal (Pl 36). Below the feet of a 12-handed Viṣṇu is a four-armed sleeping Ananta with heavy coils and a seven-hooded snake canopy. He carries pestle in lower right hand, water pot in normal left and crocodile-headed plough in upper left.
Chāṅgu Nārāyaṇa, L 14. (Ht 5″)
Artibus Asiae, XXXV, 1/2, pp 79-148, Fig 13.

++23 British Museum, 1881, 10-10, 1 (Pl 27), 1040 AD. Bronze figure of Balarāma, Ekānamśā and Vāsudeva, dated in the year 48 of King Mahīpāla. Balarāma has four hands carrying pestle, an indistinct object, bowl of wine, and plough resting on ground with blade upward. Along with *vanamālā*, long *yajñopavīta* and usual ornaments, he has a seven-hooded snake canopy.
Imadpur, Muzaffarpur district, Bihar.
Kar, Chintamani, *Indian Metal Sculpture*, 1952, London, Pl 5.

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++24 Nānda Śiva-liṅga, Rajasthan, circa 3rd Century AD. On the lowest part of the red sandstone Śiva-*liṅga*, there are four figures, one for each cardinal point. One is Viṣṇu, and the remaining three comprise an Ekānamśā group. Balarāma is two-handed and carries a heavy plough on his shoulders. Nānda, near Pushkar, Rajasthan.
Agrawal R.C., Chaturmukha Śiva-liṅga from Nānda, *Purātatva*, Varanasi, 1968-69, pp 53-54.

++25 Paharpur figure, circa 7th Century AD. Four-handed Balarāma, stafflike *mūsala* and *hala* in upper hands, small bowl in down-stretched right hand, and normal left resting on thigh. Seven-hooded snake canopy, dwarfish female with wine bottle and flask on his right side and a dwarf supporting plough on left.
Paharpur, Bengal.
Saraswati S.K., *A Survey of Indian Sculpture*, Calcutta, 1957, Fig 122.

++26 Devangarh Ekānamśā group, Patna Museum, circa 1-2nd Century AD.
Independent images of the three deities. Balarāma is two-handed, his right is in *abhayamudrā*, while the left holds a lion-plough. Pattern usually follows Mathura school.
Devangarh, Gaya district, Bihar.
Gupta P L., Ekānamśā and Her Images, *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, LIV, Pls 1-4, 1968, p 242.

++27 Kurkihar bronze figure, circa 9-10th Century AD. Independent figure of four-handed Balarāma standing on a lotus and holding indistinct objects. Seven hooded snake canopy

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and flanked by two miniature female figures, one to the right carrying eatables and the other to the left a wine bottle.
Kurkihar, Bihar.

Thaper E.R., *Icons in Bronze*, Asia Publishing House, Bombay, 1961, Pl XI.

++28 Figure from Narayan Hiti Temple, Kathmandu. Saṅkarṣaṇa in Chaturmurti Viṣṇu figures, four-handed and carrying pestle, plough and conch.

Kathmandu, Nepal. (Ht 2′ 4″)

Slusser Mary Shepherd and Gautam Vajracharya, Some Nepalese Stone Sculptures, *Artibus Asiae*, Ascona, 1973, XXXV, 1/2, p 115, Fig 25.

++29 National Museum, New Delhi, L 39. Standing Viṣṇu in black stone holding *gadā*, *śaṅkha*, *padma* and *chakra* clockwise. The Nāgarī inscription on the pedestal identifies the figure as Saṅkarṣaṇa, (V) S 1204/1147 AD.

Sharma B.N., An Inscribed Image of Viṣṇu-Saṅkarṣaṇa from Mehrauli, Delhi, *Journal of the Indian Society of Oriental Art* (NS), VI, pp 67-71 and plate.

++30 National Museum, New Delhi. Bronze figure of Balarāma from Nalanda, holding a dish of sweets, pestle, plough and wine cup.
Banerji R.D., *Eastern Indian School of Mediaeval Sculpture*, Delhi, 1933, Pl I, Fig b.

++31 National Museum, New Delhi, 64-380. Four-armed standing figure from Bihar, holding cup, pestle, ploughshare in three hands, lower

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left in *katyavilambita* pose.

Sharma B.N., Pāla and Sena Sculptures in the National Museum, New Delhi, *East and West*, Rome, 19, 3-4, pp 417-18, Fig 6.

++32 VRS Museum, Rajshahi, 386. Balarāma from Dinajpur, holding wine cup, pestle and plough in three hands, while lower left hand is in *katyavilambita* pose.

Banerjea J.N., *Religion in Art and Archaeology*, Lucknow, 1968, p 40, Pl XI.

++33 Pan-Asian Collection, U.S.A. Four-armed Balarāma standing in flexed pose under cobra hoods carrying a wine cup in the lower left hand. Circa 11th Century AD, North India. Pal P., *The Sensuous Immortals*, Los Angeles, 1978, p 72, Fig 40.

PART I

List of Balarāma Figures in UP

(i) *Early Figures*

+1	SML	G 215	(S)
+2	Bh K Bh	279	(S)

(ii) *Jaina Baladeva two-armed*

+3	MM	34, 2488	(K)
+4	SML	J 60	(K)
+5	SML	J 117	(K)

(iii) *Jaina Baladeva four-armed*

+6	SML	J 47	(K)
+7	SML	Surpl 758	(K)
+8	MM	43, 2502	(K)
+9	SML	J 121	(G)
+10	SML	J 89	(G)
+11	SML	37, 2738	(M)

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+12	SML	J 776	(M)
+13	SML	J 78	(M)
+14	SML	66, 53	(M)
+15	MM	D 7	(M)
(iv) *Brahmanical Balarāma without canopy*			
+16	MM	17, 1325	(K)
(v) *Chaturvyūha-mūrti*			
+17	MM	14, 392-95	(K)
(vi) *Two-handed, snake-canopied, without weapons*			
+18	MM	C 15	(K)
+19	MM	14, 406	(K)
+20	MM	52, 3636	(K)
+21	SML	57, 457	(K)
+22	MM	17, 1300	(K)
+23	MM	U 84	(K)
+24	MM	17, 1314	(K)
+25	MM	SN 150	(K)
+26	MM	17, 1334	(G)
+27	MM	14-15, 435	(G)
+28	MM	SN 18	(G)
(vii) *Two-handed, snake-canopied, with weapons*			
+29	MM	C 19	(K)
(viii) *Four handed, snake-canopied, with weapons*			
+30	MM	18, 1377	(G)
+31	MM	15, 1116	(M)
+32	MM	R 46	(M)
+33	MM	U 99	(M)
+34	MM	32, 2125	(M)
+35	MM	D 36	(Mdr)
(ix) *Incarnations*			
+36	MM	16, 1212	(M)
+37	SML	H 106	(M)
+38	SML	42, 189	(M)
+39	SML	65, 180	(M)
+40	AllM	410	(M)
+41	AllM	452	(M)
+ 42	Mangalagauri, Varanasi		

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(x) *Other Balarāma figures*

+43	AllM	858	(K)
+44	Raj Mandir, Varanasi		(M)

(xi) *With Ekānamśā-Revatī*

+45	MM	67, 529	(K)
+46	MM	U 45	(K)
+47	MM	39, 2856	(K)
+48	MM	15, 912	(K)
+49	Lakṣmī Kuṇḍa, Varanasi		(M)
+50	SML	G 58	(M)
+51	MM	U 98	(M)
+52	Kardamesvara Temple, Varanasi		(M)

(xii) *Figures of Ananta*

+53	AllM	292	(G)
+54	Dasavatara Temple, Deogarh		(G)
+55	Bhitargaon, Kanpur		(G)

(xiii) *Depicting episodes*

+56	Bh K Bh	20088	(M)

PART II

List of Balarāma Figures outside UP

++1	Tumain, Gwalior	(S)
++2	Two-handed, Gwalior	(G)
++3	Four-handed, Berlin (W Germany)	(G)
++4	With female wine bearers, Gwalior	(M)
++5	With female wine bearers, Rajasthan	(M)
++6	With Revatī, Rajasthan	(M)
++7	On Garuḍa, Osian	(M)
++8	Abaneri	(M)
++9	With Gaja-Lakṣmī, Amjhara, Rajasthan	(M)
++10	With Revatī, Bharatpur	(M)
++11	As *avatāra*, Badoli, Kota	(M)
++12	With female attendants, Gwalior	(M)
++13	With female attendants, Gwalior	(M)

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++14	Khajuraho	(M)
++15	Seated, Khajuraho	(M)
++16	*Lomaharṣaṇa Vadha*, Khajuraho	(M)
++17	With Revatī, Khajuraho	(M)
++18	With Kṛṣṇa, Khajuraho	(M)
++19	As *avatāra*, Khajuraho	(M)
++20	As *avatāra* (Allahabad M 377) Khajuraho	(M)
++21	As *avatāra* (Allahabad M 265) Khajuraho	(M)
++22	Ananta, Nepal	(M)
++23	Imadpur, Bihar, British Museum, London	(M)
++24	Nanda, Rajasthan	(K)
++25	Paharpur, Bengal	(M)
++26	Devangarh, Bihar	(K)
++27	Kurkihar, Bihar	(M)
++28	Nepal	(M)
++29	Saṅkarṣaṇa-Viṣṇu, New Delhi	(M)
++30	Nalanda	
++31	Bihar	
++32	Dinajpur	
++33	North India	

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5

Passages from the Original Texts on the Iconographic Features of Balarāma

This is an appendix to what has been discussed before. Here I am quoting extracts from different Purāṇas, classical literature, epics, works on iconography and other sources throwing light on the subject. Every passage has been separately numbered for convenience in cross-referencing. Effort has been made to arrange the Brahmanical and Jaina passages on a very broad chronological basis.

(1) तत्र चन्द्र प्रतीकाशं पन्नगं धरणीधरम्
पद्मपत्रविशालाक्षं ततो द्रक्ष्यथ वानराः ॥
आसीनं पर्वतस्याग्रे सर्वदेव नमस्कृतम्
सहस्रशिरसं देवं अनन्तं नीलवाससम् ॥
त्रिशिराः काञ्चनः केतुः तालस्तस्य महात्मनः
स्थापितः पर्वतस्याग्रे विराजति स वेदिकः ॥

—वाल्मीकीय रामायण, किष्किन्धा, ४०, ५ -५३, पृ० ७९१

(2) A palm pillar, but perhaps not associated with Balarāma.

अन्तरामेरुमस्तं च तालो दशशिरा महान्

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जातरूपमय: श्रीमान् भ्राजतेचित्रवेदिक: ।।

—वा० रामायण, किष्किन्धा, ४२, ४६, पृ० ७९८

(3) स चापि केशौ हरिरुद्यथर्ह शुक्लमेकमपरं चापि कृष्णम् ।
तौ चापि केशौ निवेशितां यदूनां कुले स्त्रियो देवकीं रोहिणीं च
तयोरेको बलदेवो बभूव, योऽसौश्वेत: तस्य देवस्य केश:
कृष्णो द्वितीय: केशव: संबभूव केशोयोऽसौ वर्णत: कृष्ण उक्त: ।।

—महाभारत, आदि०, १९६, ३२-३३, पृ० ५६७

(4) यस्तु नारायणो नाम देवदेव: सनातन:
तस्यांशो मानुषेष्वासीद् वसुदेव: प्रतापवान् ।।
शेषस्यांशश्च नागस्य बलदेवो महाबल:
सनत्कुमारं प्रद्युम्नं विद्धि राजन् महौजसम् ।।

—महाभारत, आदि०, ६७, १५१-५२, पृ० २००

(5) वनमालीतत: क्षीव: कैलासशिखरोपम:
नीलवास: मदोत्सिक्त: इदं वचनमब्रवीत् ।।

—महाभारत, आदि०, २१९, २०, पृ० ६२४

(6) अथ तस्यां समभवत् बलदेवस्तु सप्तम: ।
याम्यया मायया ते तु यमो राजा विशाम्पते ।।
देवक्या गर्भमतुलं रोहिण्या जठरे क्षिपत्
आकृष्य कर्षणात् सम्यक् संकर्षण इति स्मृत: ।।
बलश्रेष्ठतया तस्य बलदेव इतिस्मृत: ।

—महाभारत, Southern version, सभा०, Chap 22, p 731

(7) नीलकौशेय वसन: कैलासशिखरोपम: ।। १९ ।।
सिंहखेलगति: श्रीमान् मदरक्तान्त लोचन: ।
... ... ।।

—महाभारत, उद्योग०, १५७, १९-२०

(8) गदायुद्ध विशेषज्ञो गदायुद्ध विशारद: ।
कृतवान् रौहिणेयो यत् तन्ममाचक्ष्व संजय ।।

—महाभारत, शल्य०, ६०, २

(9) अथापश्यद्योग युक्तस्य तस्यं
नागं मुखान्निश्चरन्त महान्तम्
श्वेतं ययौ सतत: प्रेक्षणभाणो

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महार्णवो येन महानुभावः ॥
सहस्रशीर्षः पर्वताभोग वर्ष्मा
रक्ताननः स्वां तनुं तां विमुच्य
सम्यक् च तं सागरः प्रत्यगृह्णन्
नागाः दिव्याः सरितश्चैव पुण्यः ॥

—महाभारत, मौसल०, ५, १३-१४

(10) तस्य चैवाग्रजो भ्राता सिताद्रि निचय प्रभः ।
हली बल इति ख्यातो भविष्यति धराधरः ॥
त्रिशिराः तस्य दिव्यश्च शातकुम्भमयो द्रुमः ।
ध्वज स्तृणेन्द्रो देवस्य भविष्यति रथाश्रितः ॥
शिरो नागैर्महाभोगैः परिकीर्णं महात्मभिः
भविष्यतिमहावाहो सर्वलोकेश्वरस्य च ॥
चिन्तितानि समेष्यन्ति शस्त्राण्यस्त्राणि चैव हि
अनन्तश्च स एवोक्तो भगवान हरिरव्ययः ॥
य एव विष्णुः सोऽनन्तो भगवान् वसुधाधरः
यो रामः सहृषीकेशो योऽच्युतः स धराधरः ॥

—महाभारत, अनुशासन०, १४७, ५४-५६

(11) गुह्यं भागवतं देवं सर्वलोकस्य भावनम्
श्रीमत्स्वास्तिकमूर्धानं प्रणमिष्यामि भोगिनम् ।
सहस्रशिरसं देवं अनन्तं नीलबाससम् ॥ ४३ ॥
... ...
स्वस्तिकायतनं दृष्ट्वा द्विजिह्वश्रीविभूषितम्
समाजस्तत्र सर्पाणां शान्त्यर्थं वै भविष्यति ॥ ४५ ॥
... ...
तस्य मध्ये सहस्रास्यं हेमतालोच्छ्रितं ध्वजम्
लाङ्गलासक्त हस्ताग्रं मुसलोपाश्रितोदरम् ॥ ४६ ॥
असिताम्बर संवीतं पाण्डुरं पाण्डुरासनम्
कुण्डलैकधरं मज सुप्तमथुरुहेक्षणम् ॥ ५० ॥
भोगोत्करासने शुभ्रे स्वेन देहेन कल्पिते
स्वासीनं स्वस्तिकाभ्यां च वराहाभ्यां महीधरम् ॥
किंचित्सव्यापवृत्तेन मौलिना हेमचूलिना

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जातरूपमयैः पद्मैः मालयाच्छन्न वक्षसम् ॥
रक्तचन्दन दिग्धागं दीर्घबाहुमरिंदमम्
पद्मनाभं सिताभ्राभं भाभिर्ज्वलित तेजसम् ॥
ददर्श भोगिनां नाथं स्थितमेकार्णवेश्वरम् ॥
—हरिवंश, विष्णु०, २६, ४३-५४, पृ० ३००

(12) हलं संवर्तकं नाम सौनन्दं मुसलं तथा
धनुषां प्रवरं शार्ङ्गं गदा कौमोदकी तथा ॥ ६० ॥
चत्वार्येतानि तेजांसि विष्णुप्रहरणानि च
ताभ्यां समवतीर्णानि यादवाभ्यां महामृधे ॥
जग्राह प्रथमं रामो ललाम प्रतिमं हलम्
सर्पन्नमिव सर्पेन्द्रं दिव्यमालाकुलं मृधे ॥
सौनन्दं च ततः श्रीमान् निरानन्दकरं द्विषाम्
सव्येन सात्वतां श्रेष्ठो जग्राह मुसलोत्तमम् ॥
—हरिवंश, विष्णु०, ३५, ६०-६३, पृ० ३४०

(13) प्रफुल्लस्य कदम्बस्य सुच्छाये निषसाद ह
वायुना मदगन्धेन वीज्यमानः सुखेन वै ॥ ६ ॥
तस्य तेनानिलौघेन सेव्यमानस्य तत्र वै
मद्यसंस्पर्शजो गन्धः संस्पृशन् घ्राणमागतः ॥ ७ ॥
तृष्णां चैनं विवेशाशु वारुणी प्रभवा तदा
शुशोष च मुखं तस्य मत्स्येवाऽपरेऽहनि ॥ ८ ॥
तस्य प्रावृषि फुल्लस्य यदम्भो जलजोज्झितम्
तत्कोटरस्थं मदिरा संजायत मनोहरा ॥
कदम्बकोटरे जाता नाम्ना कादम्बरीति सा ।
रूपिणी वारुणी तत्र देवनामृत तारिणी ॥ १३ ॥
कादम्बरी मद कलं विदित्वा कृष्णपूर्वजम् ।
... ... ॥
... ...

(14) इयं च सा मया भौलिः प्रोद्धता वरुणालयात्
मूर्ध्नि शीर्षमहस्रस्य या ते भानुरिवाबभौ ॥
जातरूपमयं चैकं कुण्डलं वज्रभूषितम् ॥
आदिपद्यं च पद्माक्षं दिव्यं श्रवणभूषणम् ॥
कौशेयानि च नीलानि समुद्रार्हाणि भावतः

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हारं च पीन तरलं समुद्राभ्यन्तरो षितम् ।।

—हरिवंश, विष्णु०, ४१, ६-३३, पृ० ३६५-६

(15) एवमुक्तत्वा गिरेश्रृंगान्मेरुश्रृंगादिवोडुराट्
निपपात बल: श्रीमान् वनमालाधरो युवा ।। ७८ ।।
कादम्बरी मदक्षीब: नीलवास: सितानन:
सशारदेन्दुसंकाशो वनमालाञ्चितोदर: ।।
कान्तैक कुण्डलधर: चारुमौलिखाङ्मुख:
निपपात नरेन्द्राणां मध्ये केशव पूर्वज: ।।

—हरिवंश, विष्णु०, ४२, ७८-८०

(16) शिरसा चारुकेशेन किञ्चिदावृतमौलिना
श्रवणैकावलम्बेन कुण्डलेन विराजता ।। २५ ।।
चन्दनार्द्रेण पीतेन वनमालावलाम्बिना
विबभौ उरसा राम: कैलासेनेव मन्दर: ।।
नीले वसानो वसने प्रत्यग्रजलदप्रभे
रराज वपुषा शुभ्र: तिमिरौघे यथा शशी ।।
लांगलेनावसिक्तेन भुजगाभोग वर्तिना
तथा भुजाग्रश्लिष्टेन मुसलेन च भास्वता ।।
स मजो बलिनां श्रेष्ठो रराजाघूर्णिताननः ।

—हरिवंश, विष्णु०, ४६, २५-२८, पृ० ३८८

(17) रेमेबलश्चन्दन पङ्कदिग्ध:
कादम्बरी पानकल: पृथुश्री:
रक्तेक्षणो रेवतिमाश्रयित्वा
प्रलम्ब बाहुर्ललित प्रयात: ।। १ ।।
नीलाम्बुदाभे वसने वसान:
चन्द्रांशुगौरे मदिराविलाक्ष:
रराजरमोऽम्बुद मध्यमेत्य
सम्पूर्णबिम्बो भगवानिवेन्दु: ।। २ ।।
वामैककर्णामलकुण्डलश्री:
स्मेरं मनोज्ञाब्जकृतवतंस:
तिर्य्यक्कटाक्षं प्रिययामुमोद
राम: सुखं चार्वभिवीक्ष्यमाण: ।।

—हरिवंश, विष्णु०, ८९, १-३, पृ० ५६६

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(18) फणा सहस्रमालाढ्यं बलभद्रं ददर्श सः
कुन्दमालाङ्गं उन्निद्रं पद्मपत्रायतेक्षणम् ॥
वृत वासुकि रंभाद्यै र्महद्भिः पवनाशिभिः
संस्तूयमानमुद्रान्धि वनमाला विभूषितम् ॥
दधानमसिते वस्त्रे चारुपद्मावतंसकम्
चारु कुण्डलिनं भान्तं अन्तर्जलतले स्थितम्
—विष्णु पुराण, पञ्चम अंश, १८, ३ -३८, पृ० ४२८

(19) एकदा रैवतोद्याने पपौ पानं हलायुधः
रेवती च महाभागा तथैवान्या वरस्त्रियः ॥
उद्गीयमानो विलसल्ललना भौलि मध्यगः
रेमे यदुकुल श्रेष्ठः कुवेर इव मन्दरे ॥
—विष्णु पुराण, पञ्चम अंश, ३६, ११-१२, पृ० ४८५

(20) अभीष्टा सर्वदा यस्य मदिरे त्वं महौजसः
अनन्तस्योपभोगाय तस्य गच्छ मुदे शुभे ।
इत्युक्ता वारुणी तेन सन्निधानमथाकरोत्
वृन्दावन समुत्पन्न कदम्बलरुकोटरे ॥
विचरन् थलदेवोऽपि मदिरागन्धमुत्तमम्
आघ्राय मदिरातर्थमवापाथ वरानन: ॥
ततः कदम्बात्सहसा मद्यधारां स लांगली
पतन्तीं वीक्ष्य मैत्रेय प्रययौ परमां मुदम् ॥
— विष्णु पुराण, पञ्चम अंश, २५, ३-६, पृ० ४५१

(21) ततस्नातस्य वै कान्तिरजायत महात्मनः
अवतं सोत्पलं चारु गृहीत्वैक च कुण्डलम् ॥
वरुणप्रहितां चास्मै मालामम्लानपङ्कजाम्
समुदाभे तथा वस्त्रे नीले लक्ष्मी रयच्छत ॥
कृतावतंसस्सलदा चारु कुण्डल भूषितः
नीलाम्बरधरस्रग्वी शुशुभे कान्ति सेयुतः ॥
—विष्णु पुराण, पंचम अंश, २५, १५-१७, पृ० ४५२

(22) अनक्षज्ञो हली द्यूते तथास्य व्यसनं महत्
न नयामो बलं कस्माद् द्यूतेनैनं महाबलम् ॥
—विष्णु पुराण, पंचम अंश, २८, ११, पृ० ४५७

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(23) बलराम प्रतिमा—

गौराङ्गं क्षीरवर्णाभं द्वितीयं स्वस्तिकाङ्कितम् ।। ४४ ।।
लांगलास्त्रधरं देवं अनन्ताख्यं महाबलम्
देवदानवगन्धर्व यक्षविद्याधरोरगैः
न विज्ञातोहि तस्यान्तः तेनानन्त इति स्मृतः ।।
नीलाम्बर धरं चोग्रं थलं बलमदोद्धतम्
कुण्डलैकधरं दिव्यं गदामुशल धारिणम् ।।

—ब्रह्मपुराण, ५०, ४४-५०

(24) त्वं वा वससि भूतेषु वासुदेवस्तथोच्यसे
संकर्षयसि भूतानि कल्पे-कल्पे पुनः पुनः ।।
ततः संकर्षणः प्रोक्तः तत्त्वज्ञान विशारदैः
प्रतिव्यूहेन तिष्ठन्ति सदेवासुर राक्षसाः ।।
प्रविद्युः सर्वधर्माणां प्रद्युम्नस्तेन उच्यते
निरोद्धा विद्यते यस्मान्नते भूतेषु कश्चन ।।
अनिरुद्ध स्ततः प्रोक्ता पूर्वमेव महर्षिभिः ।।

—मत्स्यपुराण, २४७, ४६-४८, पृ० ६६१

(25) लाङ्गली मुषली रामो गदापद्मधरः स्मृतः
प्रद्युम्नो दक्षिणे वज्रं शखं वामे धनुः करे ।
गदानाम्यावृतः प्रीत्या प्रद्युम्नो वा धनुः शरी
चतुर्भुजोऽनिरुद्धस्यात्तथा नारायणो विभुः ।।

—अग्निपुराण, ४६, १२-१३

(26) गदालांगलधारी च रामो वाथ चतुर्भुजः
वामोर्ध्वे लांगलं दद्यादथ शंखं सुशोभनम्
मुघलं दक्षिणोर्ध्वे तु चक्रचाधः सुशोभनम्

—अग्निपुराण, ४६, ६-७

(27) पीतपानो जगामाथ रैवतोद्यानमृद्धिमत्
हस्ते गृहीत्वा समदां रेवतीमप्स रोपमाम् ।।
स्त्री कदम्बक मध्यस्थो ययौ मतः पदास्खलन्

—मार्कण्डेय पुराण, ६, ७

(28) चतुर्धा संस्थितो व्यापी सगुणो निर्गुणो पि च
एकाभगवतो मूर्तिः ज्ञानरूपा शिवाऽमला ।।

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वासुदेवाभिधाना सा गुणातीता सुनिष्कला
द्वितीया कालसंज्ञाऽन्या तामसी शिव (शेष) संज्ञिता ॥
निहंत्री सकलस्यान्ते वैष्णवी परमा तनुः
सत्त्वोद्रिक्ता तृतीयान्या प्रद्युम्नेति च संज्ञिता ॥
जगत्सं स्थापये द्विश्वं सा विष्णोः प्रकृतिर्ध्रुवा
चतुर्थी वासुदेवस्य मूर्तिर्येह्येति संज्ञिता ॥
राजसी साऽनिरुद्धस्य पुरुषसृष्टि कारिता
यः स्वपित्याखिलं हत्त्वा प्रद्युम्नेन सहप्रभुः ॥

—कूर्मपुराण, ५१, ४०-४३

(29) जगन्नाथमूर्तिः

शंखचक्रगदापद्म लसद्दाहुर्जनार्दनः
गदामुपलचक्राब्जं धारयन्पन्नगाकृतिः ॥ ९ ॥
छत्राकृतिफणा सप्त मुकुटोज्ज्वज कुण्डलः
..... ॥ १० ॥
ददर्श बलदेवञ्च साट्टहाससमुखाम्बुजम्
फणामण्डल विस्तीर्णं वारुणी घूर्णितक्षणम् ॥ ४१ ॥
प्रोत्थितं नाग राजानं पीनोन्नत सुवक्षसम्
किंचिन्नतं पृष्ठदेशे कुण्डलीकृत विग्रहम्
अग्रसंफुल्ल ककुभं कैलास शिखरं यथा
हलचक्राब्ज मुसल धारिणं वनमालिनम्
हार कुण्डल केयूर किरीटमुकुटोज्ज्वलम् ॥

—स्कन्दपुराण, वैष्णव खण्ड, १९, ९-१०; १९, ४१-४४

(30) सजलाम्बुदसच्छायं पीत दिव्याम्बरं तथा ॥ १० ॥
मुखाश्च कार्याश्चत्वारो बाहवोद्विगुणास्तथा
सौम्यं तु वदनं पूर्वं नारासिंह तु दक्षिणम् ॥
कापिलं पश्चिमं वक्त्रं तथा वाराहमुत्तरम्
तस्य दक्षिणहस्तेषु बाणाक्षमूसलादयः

Restored reading

तस्य दक्षिण हस्तेषु बाणाऽसिमुसलोदित्यः (रविः) ॥ १२ ॥
चर्म चीरं धनुश्चेन्द्रचापेषु वनमालिनः

Restored

चर्म सरिश्चेन्द्रचापं वामेणु वनमालिनः

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कार्याणि विष्णोर्धर्मज्ञ.....

—विष्णुधर्मोत्तर०, III.४४, १०-१३, पृ० ३३७

(31) वासुदेवश्च भगवांस्तथा संकर्षण प्रभुः
प्रद्युम्नश्चानि रुद्धश्च बलाद्याः परिकीर्तिताः ।। १० ।।
द्वौ द्वौ भुजौ तु विज्ञेयौ प्रतिवक्त्रं महात्मनः
वासुदेवस्य करयोः ज्ञातव्यौ सूर्यरात्रिपौ ।। ११ ।।
संकर्षणस्य करयोस्तथा मुसलंलाङ्गले
प्रद्युम्नस्य तथा ज्ञेयौ चापबाणौ महाभुज ।। १२ ।।
अनिरुद्धस्य विज्ञेयौ चर्मखडगौ विचक्षणैः
पुरुषप्रकृतिर्ज्ञेयौ सूयचन्द्रमसौ उभौ ।। १३ ।।
एतेच वासुदेवस्य करे चक्रगदे मते
कालं च लांगलं विद्धि मृत्युं च मुसल तथा ।। १४ ।।
ताभ्यां संकर्षणोरुद्रः कर्षतीदं चराचरम्
प्रद्युम्नदस्य करे वह्नेः शार्ङ्गं चापं च यत्स्मृतम् ।। १५ ।।
ध्येयं तु परमं लक्ष्यं ताभ्यां छिन्दन्ति योगिनः
(सांख्यं तद्विद्धि धर्मज्ञ योगं बाणं प्रकीर्तितम्) ।। १६ ।।
ब्रह्मणस्त्वनिरुद्धस्य करे चर्म महाभुज
अज्ञानावरणं ज्ञेयं जगत्सृष्टिप्रयोजनम् ।। १७ ।।

—विष्णुधर्मोत्तर पुराण, III.४७, १०-१७, पृ० ३३८

(32) कुर्याच्छशांक संकाशं रत्नोज्वल फणान्वितम्
नीलवस्त्रं चतुर्बाहुं सर्वाभरणधारिणम् ।। २ ।।
फणाश्च व्यूहवः कार्या यत्फणं तस्य मध्यमम्
तत्र रूपवती कार्या वसुधा यदुनन्दन
पद्मं समुपलं कार्यं देवदक्षिण हस्तयोः
वामयोः क्षीरशंखे चकरे तस्यसुराम्बुधिः ।।
लालवृक्षं जगत्सर्वं कथितं तु महाभुज
विख्यातौ सीर मुसलौ पूर्वमेव मया तव ।।
वनमाला च विख्याता तथा यदुकुलोद्वह
पृथिवी धार्यते तेन सशैलवन काननां ।।
पृथिवी तेन कर्त्तव्या फणेतस्य तु मध्यमे ।। ७ ।।

—विष्णुधर्मोत्तर०, III.६५, २ ७ पृ० ३४२

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(33) मूर्तिः सांकर्षिणी विष्णोः रुद्रः संहार कारकः
कल्यक्षये तु संहारं करोति जगतां हि सः
—विष्णुधर्मोत्तर०, ५१, १७

(34) तथा संकर्षणं देवं अर्थकामस्तु पूजयेत् ॥ ३ ॥
बलकामस्तथा देवः बलभद्रं प्रपूजयेत् ॥ १२ ॥
तभेव राजशार्दूल कृषिकर्म प्रसिद्धये
सर्वकाम प्रदं देवं..... .. ..॥ १३ ॥
—विष्णुधर्मोत्तर०, ११८, ३, १२-१३

(35) बलार्थी बलभद्रेति —१२२, १२
बलभद्रं समृद्धार्थे कृष्यारम्भे हलायुधम् (संस्मरेत्)
—विष्णुधर्मोत्तर०, १२३, १२

(36) अनन्तः अनन्तगुणार्णवः आदिदेवो वासुदेवः सहस्रवदनो नागेन्द्र हव मध्यवपुः कैलास हव शुक्ल प्रकाशः कोटिसूर्य प्रतिभासः, कोटि कन्दर्प हारि लावण्येन विभ्राजमानः कमलपत्राक्षः कमलकर्णिका दिव्य वनमाला निर्मलपरिमल परिलोभित मधुकर निकरसंगीयमानः.. .....
—गर्गसंहिता, बलभद्र खण्ड, ३, १६

(37) मानुष्य वासुदेव—द्विभुजं चक्रशंखधरं दक्षिणे रुक्मिणीं,
दद्दाक्षिणे हलमुसलधरं बलभद्रं, तद्दाक्षिणे प्रद्युम्नं
क्षुरिकाधरं तद्दाक्षिणहस्तं कट्यवलंबितं वामहस्तं,
वामेपार्श्वे अनिरुद्धं द्विभुजं खड्गखेटकधरम् ।
—वैखानसागम, Elements, I, Pt 2, Appendix, p 64

(38) अथबलभद्रामं मध्यमं दशतालमितं । द्विभजं, त्रिनतं, दक्षिणहस्तेन मुसलधरं, वामेन हलधरं, श्वेताभं, रक्तवस्त्रधरं, उद्बद्ध कुन्तलं, दक्षिणे रेवती देवीं पद्म किंजल्कवर्णां पुष्पाम्बरधरां, दक्षिणे न हस्तेन पद्मधरां प्रसारित वामहस्तामेव कारयेत् । तद्रूपं कौतुकं विष्णुं चतुर्भुजं वा कारयेत् ।
—वैखानसागम, Elements, I, Pt 2, Appendix, p 44

(39) बलदेवो हलपाणिः मदाविभ्रमलोचनश्च कर्त्तव्यः
विभ्रत्कुण्डलमेकं शंखेन्दुमृणाल गौर वपुः
—बृहत्संहिता, ५७, ३६.

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(40) वासुदेवस्सितः शान्तः सिताब्जस्थश्चतुर्भुजः
योगमूर्ध्वोर्ध्वशंखश्च दक्षे शार्ङ्गधरः स्मृतः
धारयेदुत्तरेचक्रं दक्षिणे च गदामिति
वासुदेव स्वरूपेण कार्यस्संकर्षण प्रभुः
स तु शुक्लवपुः कार्यो नीलवासायदूत्तमः
गदास्थाने च मुसलं चक्रस्थाने च लाङ्गलम्
दक्षोर्ध्व करे शंखः दक्षाधः करे मुसलम्
वामाधः करे शार्ङ्ग वामोर्ध्व करे लाङ्गलं, श्वेतवर्णः

—श्रीतत्त्वनिधिः, p 53, No 43, also p 191, No 17

(41) बलरामो देवता सितप्रभः
द्विभुजः दक्षिणे हलधरः प्रलम्ब वामहस्तः नीलाम्बरधरः
सर्वालंकार भूषितः ।।

—श्रीतत्त्वनिधिः, p 42, No 227

(42) मद्यपात्रं च सीरं च वामदक्षिणयोः क्रमात्
गदा मुसलवज्रं च हली राम दधात्सितः
मुसलरूपं वज्रं इत्यर्थः । क्षरिवर्णः

—श्रीतत्त्वनिधिः, p 55

(43) बलस्तु सुभुजः श्रीमान् तालकेतुर्महाद्युतिः
वनमाला कुलोरस्को निशाकर समप्रभः ।। ३६ ।।
गृहीत सीर मुसलः कार्योदिव्यमदोत्करः
चतुर्भुजः सौम्य वक्त्रो नीलाम्बरसमावृतः ।।
कूटालंकृत शिरारोहो..... ....रागविभूषितः
रेवती सहितः कार्यो बलदेवः प्रतापवान् ।।

—प्रतिमालक्षणम्, Shukla D.N., *Pratimā Vijñāna*, pp 328-9

(44) सशीर (सीर) मुशलो बलः

—रूपमण्डन, ३, २७

(45) उपगीयमान चरितो वनिताभिर्हलायुधः
वनेषु व्यचरत् क्षीबो मदविह्वल लोचनः
स्रग्व्यैककुण्डलो मत्तो वैजयन्त्या च मालया

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बिभ्रत् स्मित मुखाम्भोजं स्वेद प्रालेय भूषितम् ।। २२ ।।
.....
कामं विहृत्य सलिलादुत्तीर्णासिताम्बरे
भूषणानि महार्हाणि ददौ कान्तिः शुभांस्रजम् ।। २९ ।।
वासित्वा वाससि नीलो मालामामुच्य कांचनीम्
रेजे स्वलंकृतो लिप्तो महेन्द्र इव वारणः ।। ३० ।।

—भागवत्, X, ६५, २९-३०

(46) तं जहा.....लक्खण वंजण गुणोववेया, ससिसोमागार कंत-पियदंसणा.....तालद्ध ओविद्ध गरुलकेड् .....हलमुसलकण्ण-पाणी.....संखचक्क गयनंदणधरा.....कुण्डल उज्जोइयाणणा .....एकावलि कठंलइयवच्छा, सिरीवच्छ सुलछणा..... सव्वउयसुरभि कुसुमरयिय पलब सोभतं कंत विकसन्त विचित्त वर-माल रइयवच्छा..... ...कटिसुत्तागनीलपीय कौसेज्ज वाससा..... नरसीहा.....दुवे दुवे रामकेसवा भायरो.....तिविठ्ठ नाव कहणे अयले जाव रामे यानि अपच्छिमे ।

—समवायाङ्ग सूत्र, सूत्र २०७, पृ० १०९४-५

(47) अथ सा रोहिणी भर्त्रा विचित्रे शयने ऽन्यदा
प्रसुप्ता चतुरः स्वप्नान् ददर्श शुभमूचिता ।।
रून्द्रं चन्द्रसमच्छायं गजेन्द्रं मन्द्र गर्जितम
समुद्रं सान्द्रं निर्घोषं महीध्रोच्चं..... ।।
चन्द्रं चन्द्रमुखीं पूर्णं हृष्ट्वा पूर्णमनोरथा
कुन्दशुभ्रं मृगेन्द्रं सा ददर्शास्यप्रवेशिनस् ।।

—जैन हरिवंश, ३२, १-३

(48) मेचकं वस्त्रयुगलं मालां च मुकुटं गदाम्
लाङ्गलं मुसलं चापं सशरं शरधिद्वयम् ।। ३६ ।।
रथं दिव्यास्त्र संपूर्णं उच्चैस्तालध्वजोर्जितम्
कुवेरः कामपालाय ददौ छत्रादिभिस्सह ।। ३७ ।।

— जैन हरिवंश, ४१, ३६-३७

(49) सिंहविद्यारथं दिव्यं दिव्यास्त्र परिपूरितम्
धनदेव समानीतं आरुरोह हलायुधः ।।

—जैन हरिवंश, ५१, ९

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(50) दिव्यायुधं हलममादपराजितारव्यं
दिव्यागदा मुसलशक्त्यवतंस माला:
रत्नानि पञ्च महितानि हलायुधस्य
हेलाविधूतरिपुमण्डल विभ्रमस्य

—जैन हरिवंश, ५३, ५१

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Glossary of Sanskrt Terms

Abhayamudrā	protection provided by position of hand, generally right
Ābhoga	same as *bhoga* (16)*
Avatārapaṭṭikā	part of the back slab (*pṛṣṭha-śilā*) of an image showing incarnations of Viṣṇu
Bhoga	body of snake
Bhogamaṇḍala	snake forming nimbus or canopy
Bhujagābhogavarti	surrounded by serpent body, serpentine coils (16)
Chhatrākṛtiphaṇā	snake canopy like an umbrella (29)
Ekakuṇḍala	single earring (of gold) studded with diamonds and shaped like *ādipadma*, the first lotus (14)
Ekārṇava	great ocean with mountainous waves absorbing the entire globe in *pralaya* (11)
Gadā	club (26)
Hema-chulī	gold crest (11)
Kādambarī	intoxicating beverage (wine) stored in cavities of *Kadamba* tree

*These numbers indicate serial number of the passage in Chapter V where the word occurs.

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Katyavilambita	hand suspended to touch hip (37)
Kuṇḍalaikadhara	wearing a single earring (11) (15) (16) (17) (23)
Kuṇḍalīkṛta vigraha	body formed in coils (29)
Lāṅgalī	name of Balarāma, literally one who holds a plough (20), same as *Hali*
Madyapātra	wine flask (42), same as *surāmbudhi*
Mahābhoga	huge body (of a snake) (10)
Mūsala (mūśala)	pestle (25) (26) (31)
Namaskāramudrā	both hands joined in devotion near the chest
Phaṇa	snake hood (32)
Phaṇāmaṇḍala	canopy of snake hoods (29)
Pralamba-vāma-hasta	left hand suspended (41)
Protthita nāgarāja	snake king with raised body (29)
Rūpa	form
Savedikah	with railings (1)
Śaṅkha	conch
Savyāpavṛtta mauli	head slightly turned left (11)
Śeṣa	the cosmic serpent
Śīra	plough (3), same as *hala* and *lāṅgala*
Sūrya-rātripau	sun and moon (31)
Surāmbudhi	literally sea of wine, stock of wine, storage jar, also in sense of wine flask to be carried as an attribute (32)
Svastikāṅkita	marked with *svastika*, cross with turned ends (23)
Svastikamūrdhānam	head with *svastika* mark (11)
Tāladhvaja	palm standard, also name of Balarāma (48) (11)

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Tālaketu	same at *tāladhvaja* (43)
Tālavṛkṣa	palm tree (32)
Trinata	with three bends (38)
Triśikha	palm with three uprights (1) (10)
Udbaddha kuntala	hair tied in a bunch (38)
Ūrdhva-śaṅkha	conch held in such a way that its channel point faces sky, same as *udagra* (40)
Viṣṇu-praharaṇa	weapons of Viṣṇu (12)
Vyūha	form

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Fig 1a

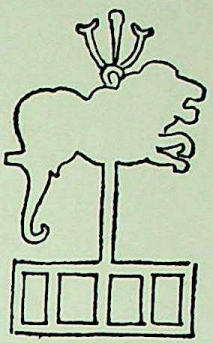
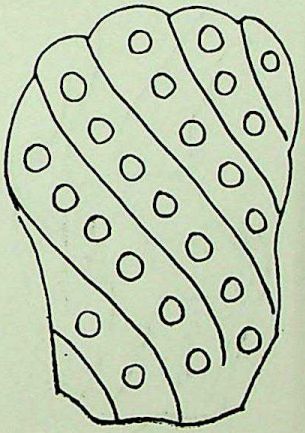


Fig 1b

Fig 2



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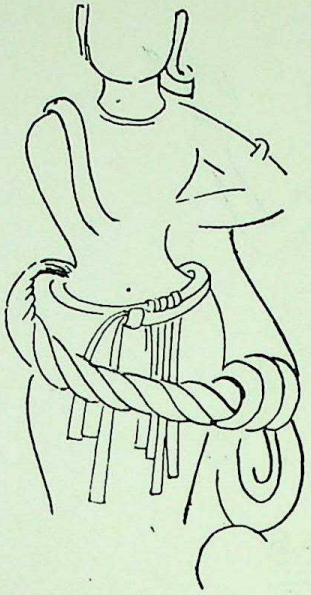

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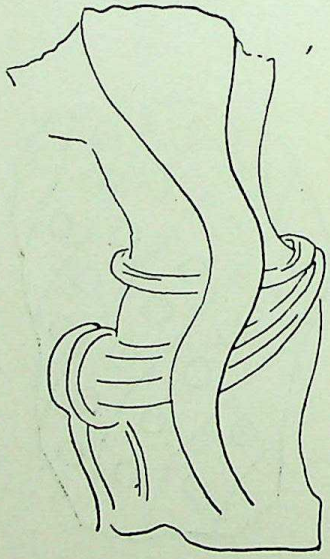

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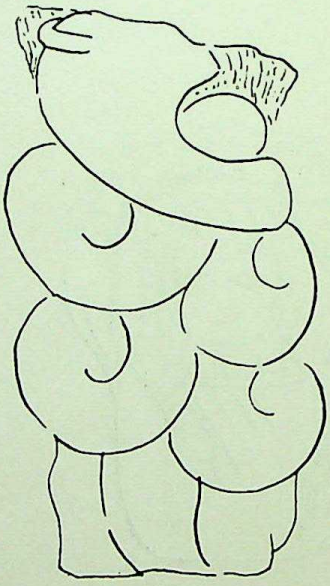

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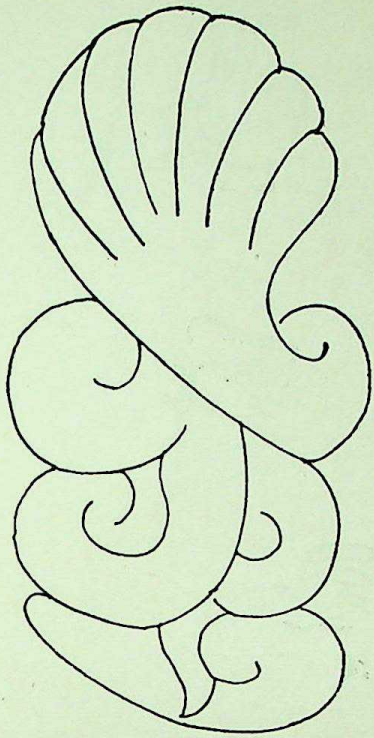

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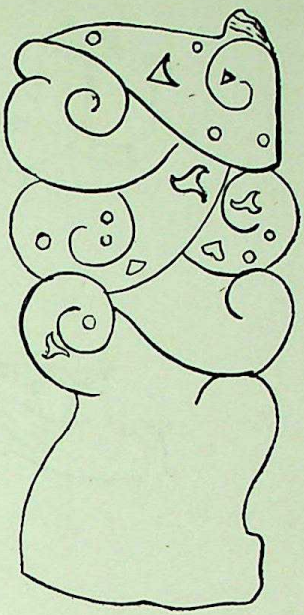

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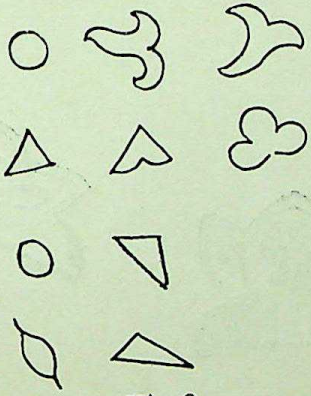

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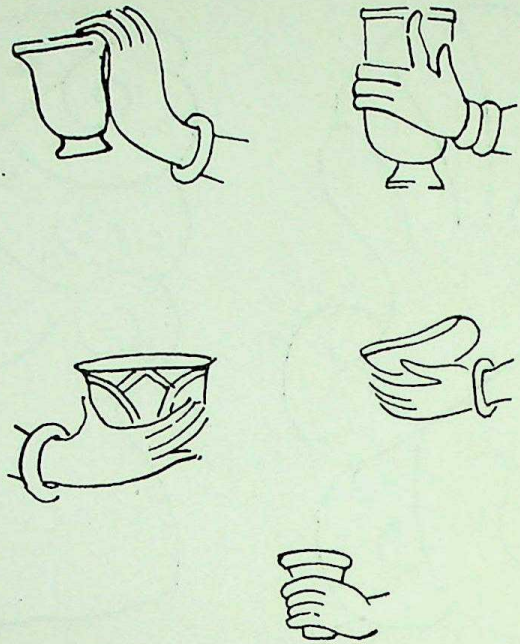

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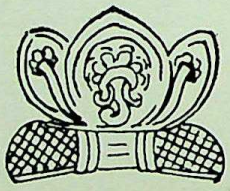

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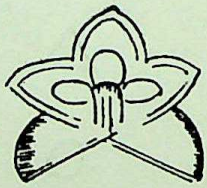

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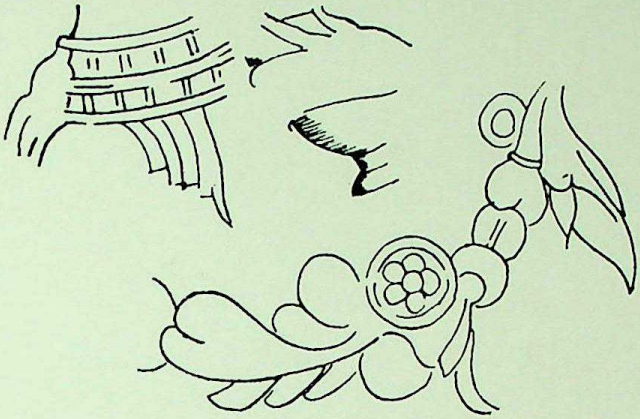

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Plates

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1. Nāga, pre-Śuṅga, MM, 17, 1303

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2. Nāga with hoods bearing auspicious symbols, Kusāṇa, MM, 14-15, 439

4. Reverse of Pl 3

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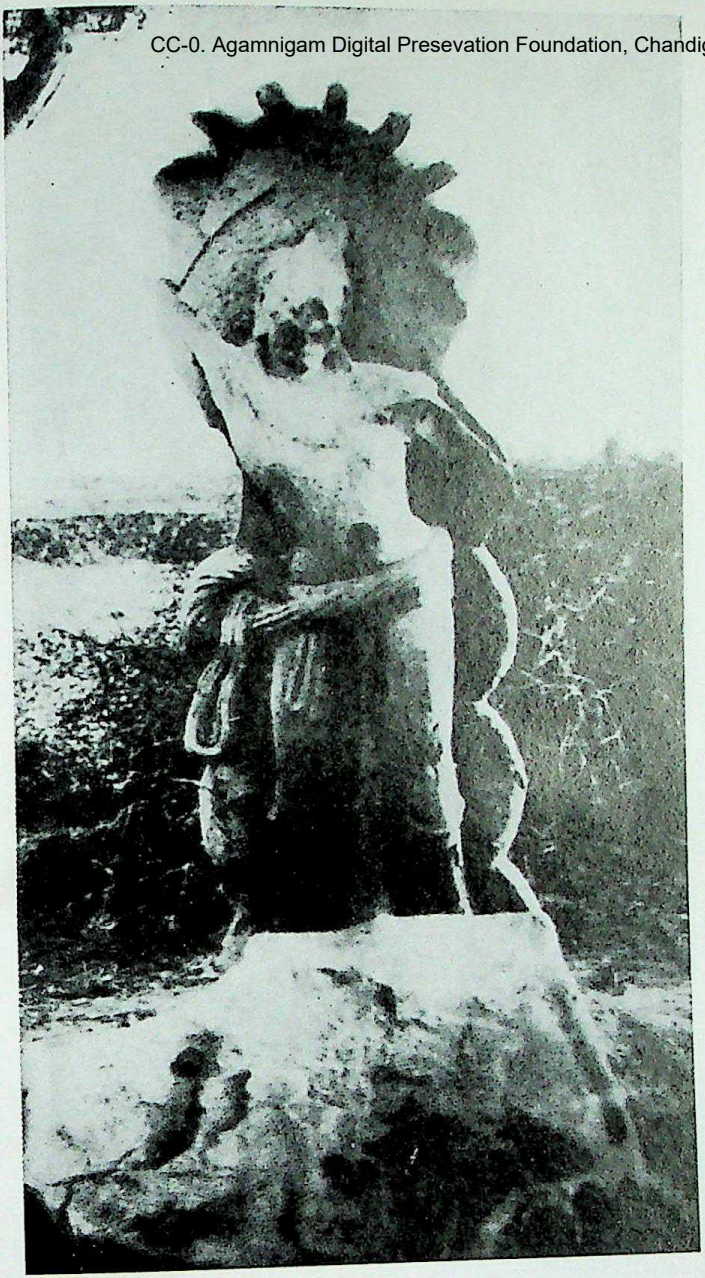

3. Inscribed Nāga from Chargaon, 40th year of Huvishka, MM, C 13

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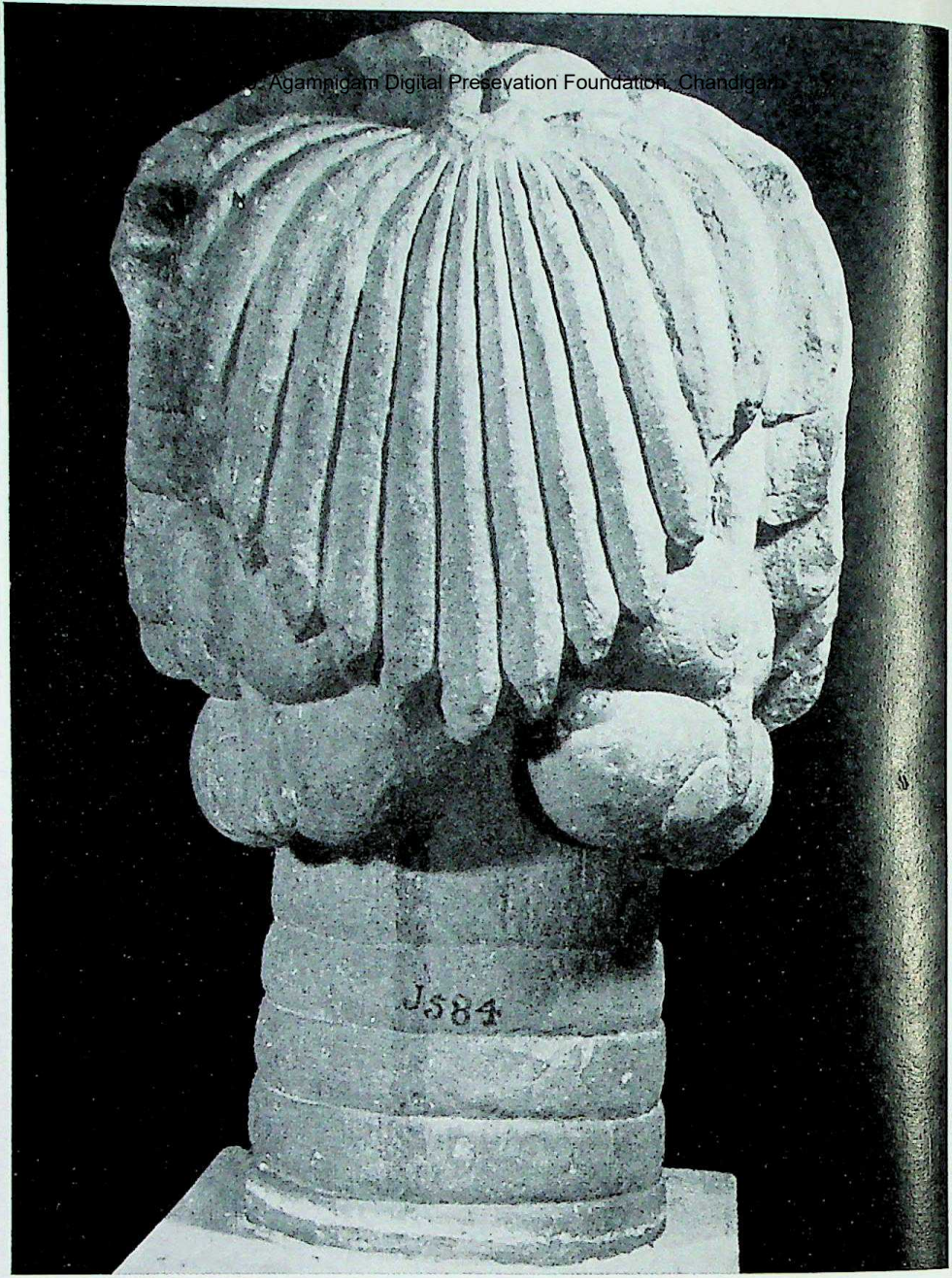

5. Palm pillar capital, Śuṅga, SML, J 584

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6. Lion-plough pillar capital, Kusāṇa, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

...nigam ...vation Foundation, Chandigarh

7. Balarāma, Śuṅga, SML, G 215 (+1)

8. Reverse of Pl 7 (+1)

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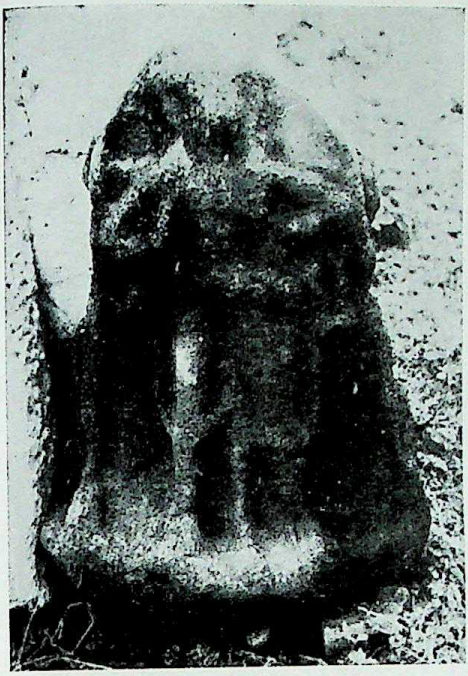

8a. Balarāma, Śuṅga, Hari Singh Gaur Museum, Sagar

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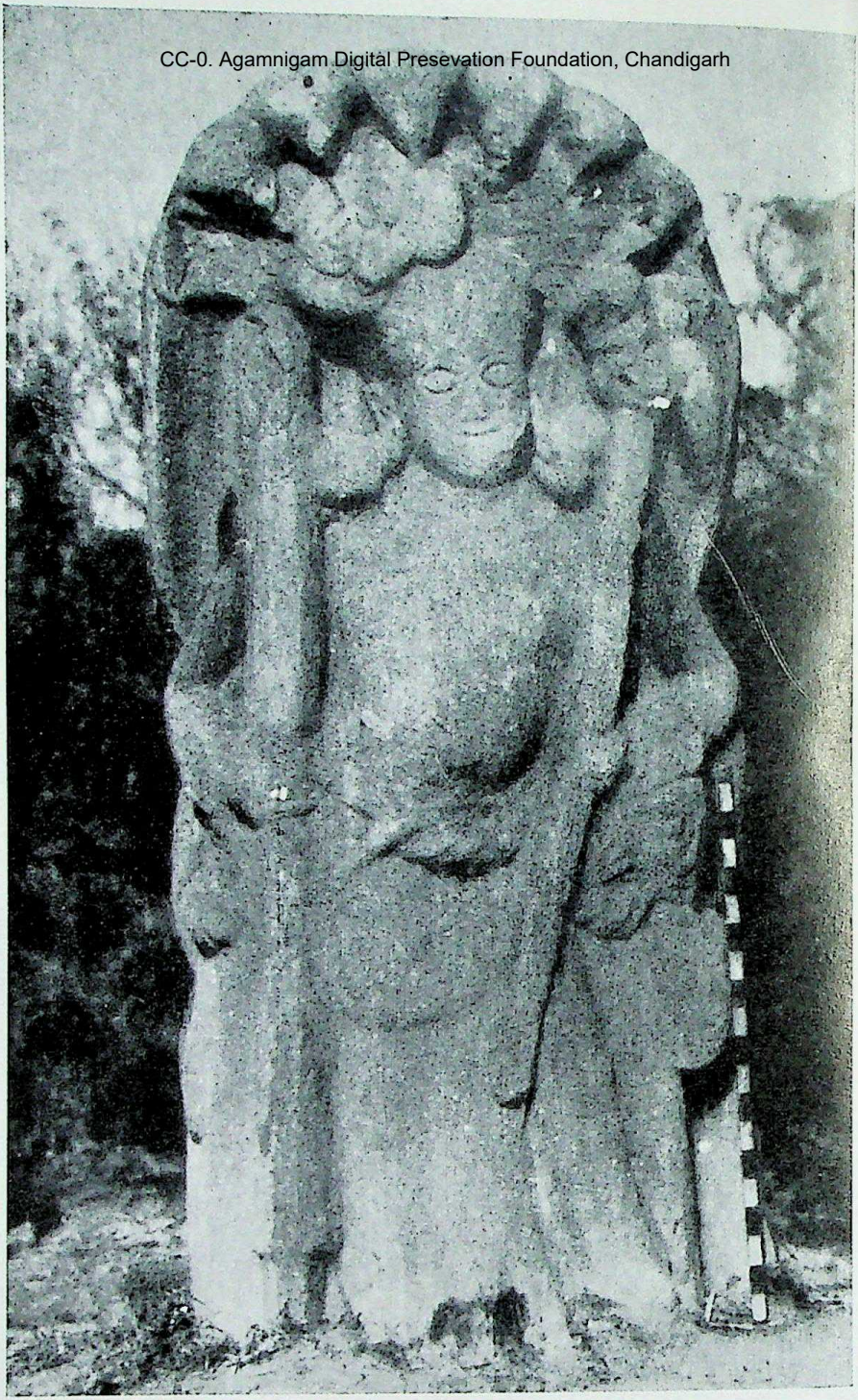

8c. Balarāma, Hari Singh Gaur Museum, Sagar, 1st Century AD

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9. Balarāma, Śuṅga, Bharat Kala Bhavan, Varanasi (+2)

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10. Two-handed Jaina Balarāma, Kusāṇa, MM, 34, 2488 (+3)

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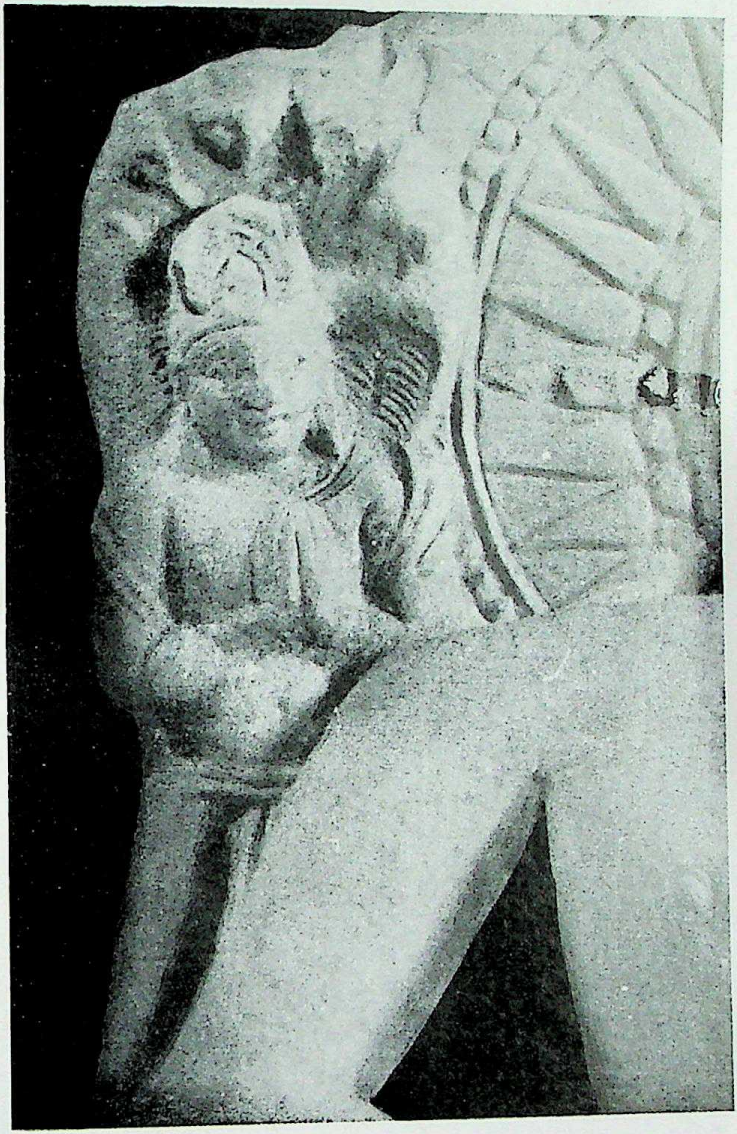
11. Two-handed Jaina Balarāma,
Kusāṇa, SML, J 117 (+5)



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12. Four-handed Jaina Balarāma, Kusāṇa, SML, S 758 (+7)

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13. Four-handed Balarāma, MM, 39, 2856 (+47)

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14. Balarāma, Ekānamśā, Vāsudeva, Kusāṇa, MM, 67, 529 (+45)

15. Balarāma and Ekānamśā, Kusāṇa, MM, U 45 (+46)

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21. Two-handed Balarāma, upper part, Kusāṇa, MM, 14, 406 (+19)

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19. *Chaturvyūha-mūrti*, Kusāṇa,
MM, 14, 392-95 (+17)

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20. Two-handed Balarāma,
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25. Four-handed Jaina Baladeva,
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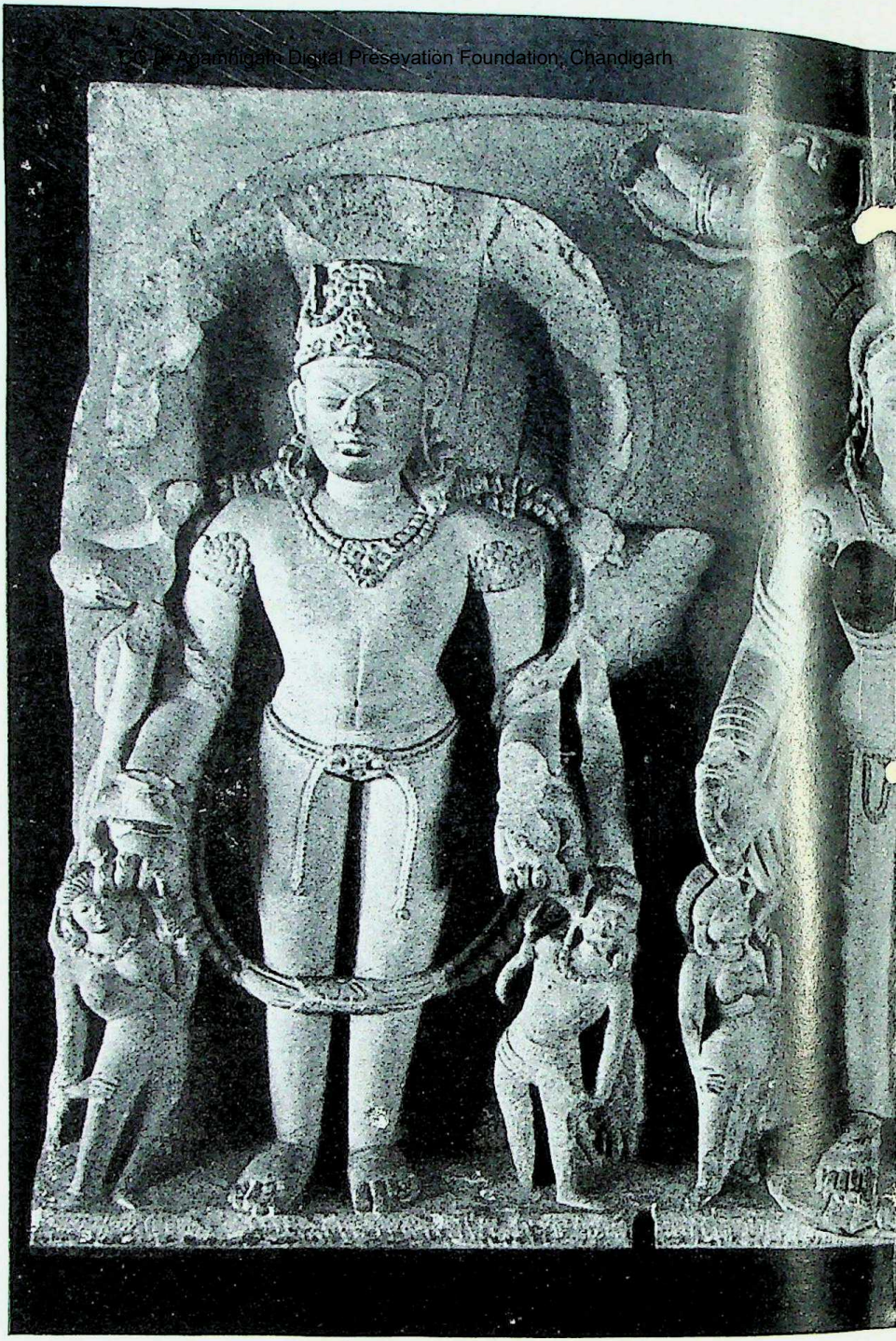

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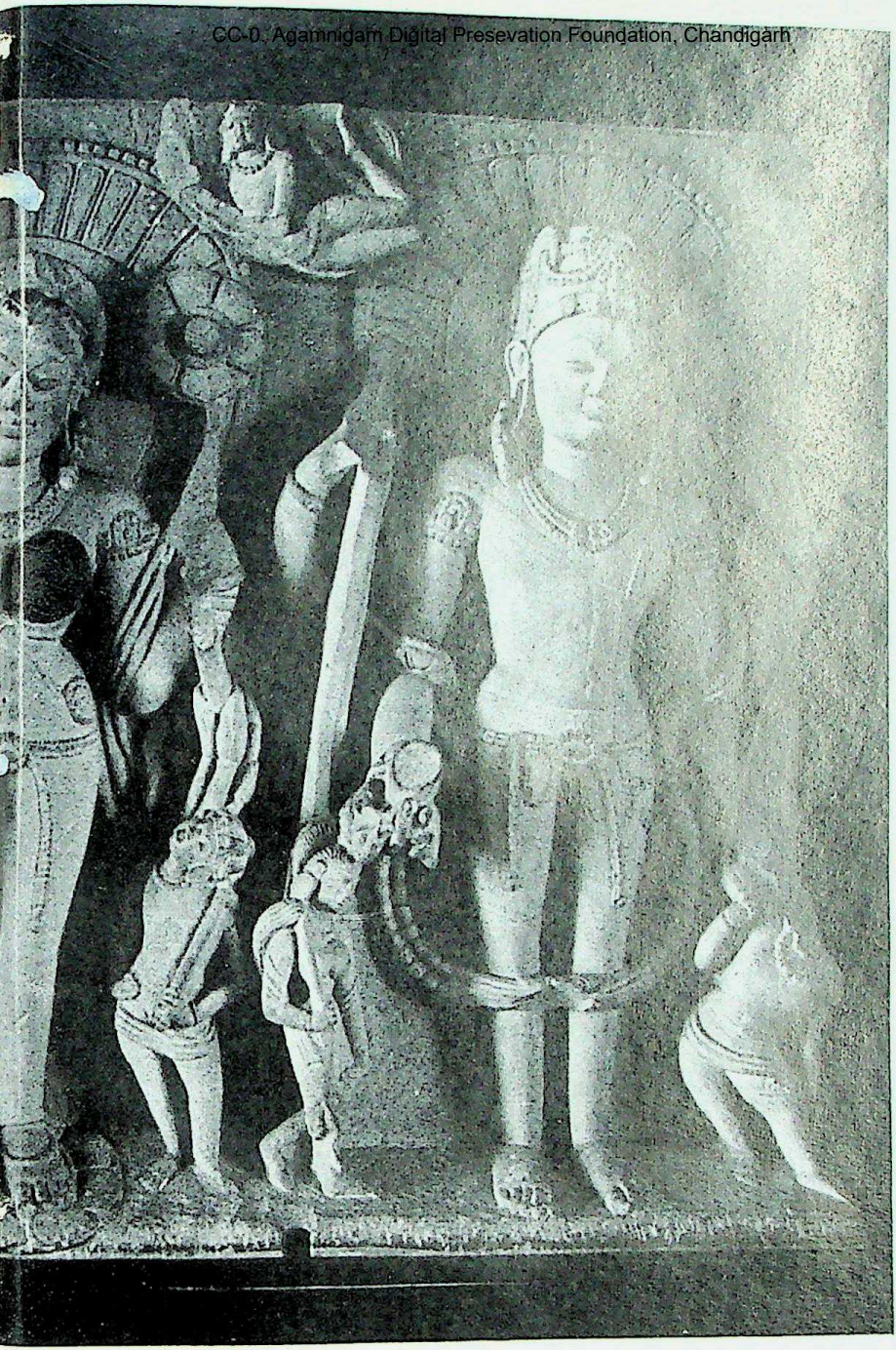

28. Balarāma, Ekānamśā, Vāsudeva, early mediaeval, SML, G 58 (+50)

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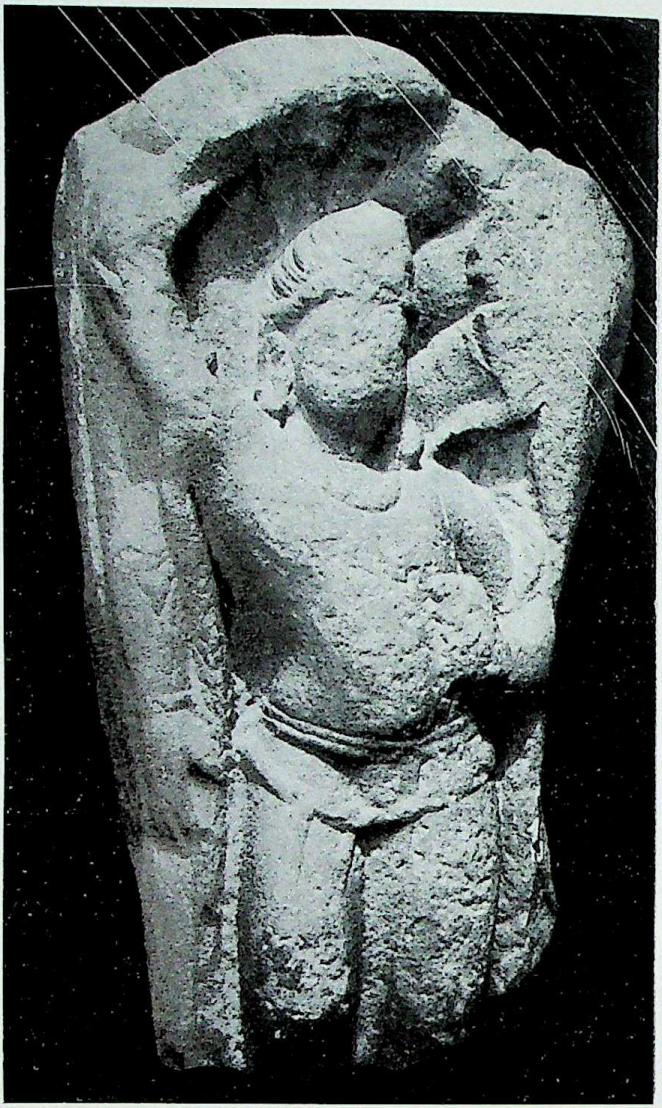

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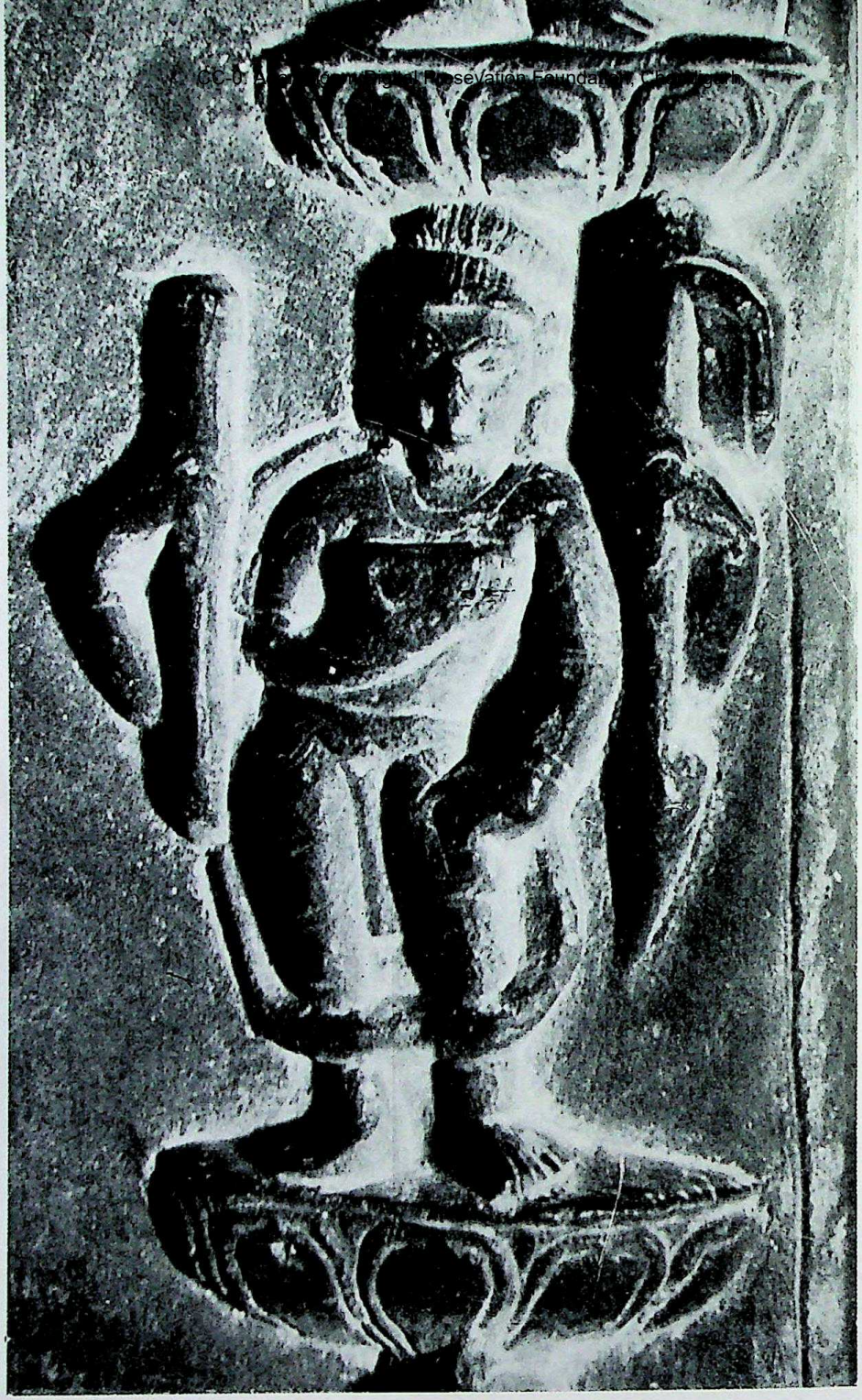

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31. Balarāma, Pāla, enlargement, mediaeval, SML, H 106 (+37)

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34. Balarāma, mediaeval, MM, 45, 3210

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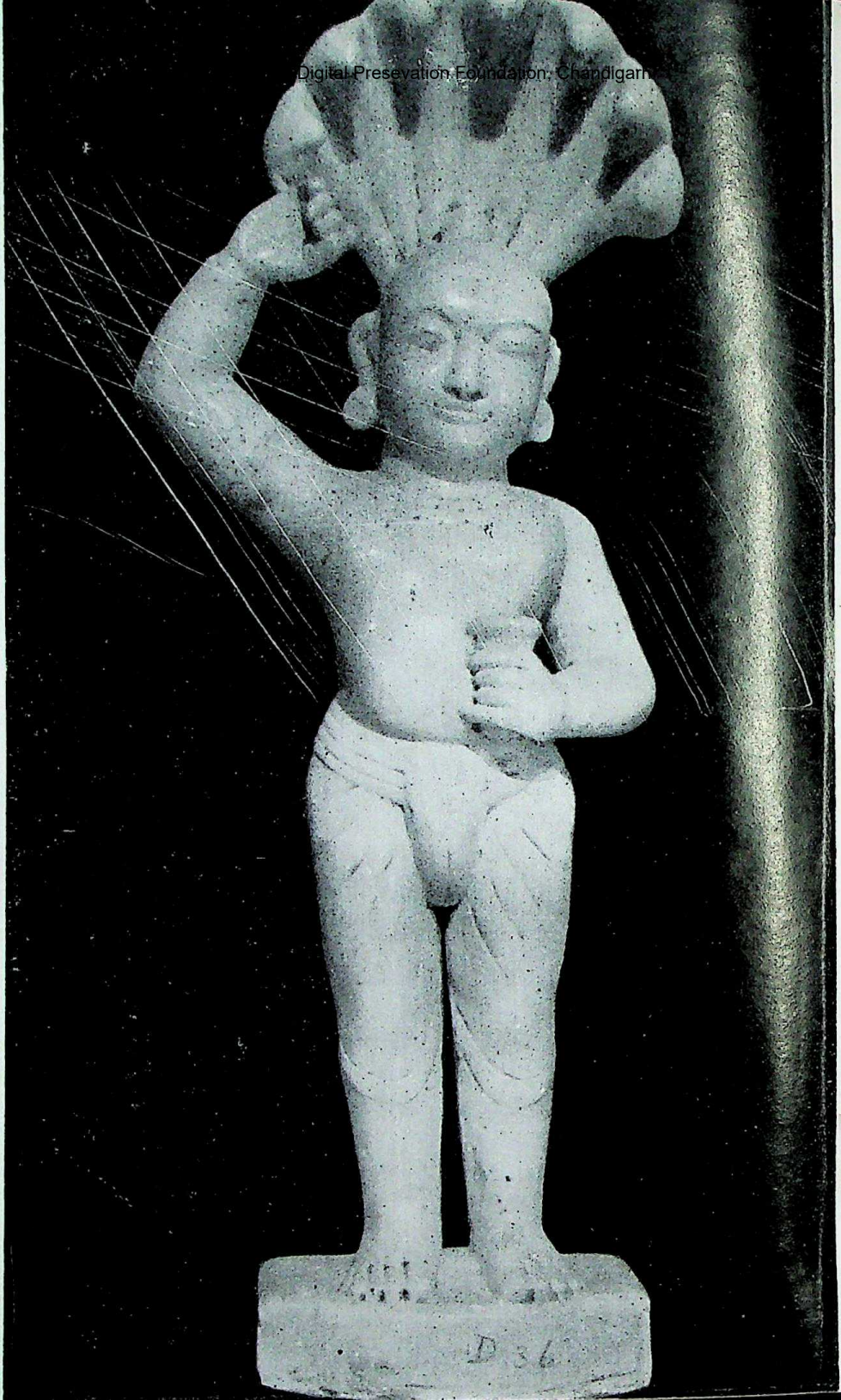

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← 35. Balarāma, modern, MM, D 36 (+35)

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